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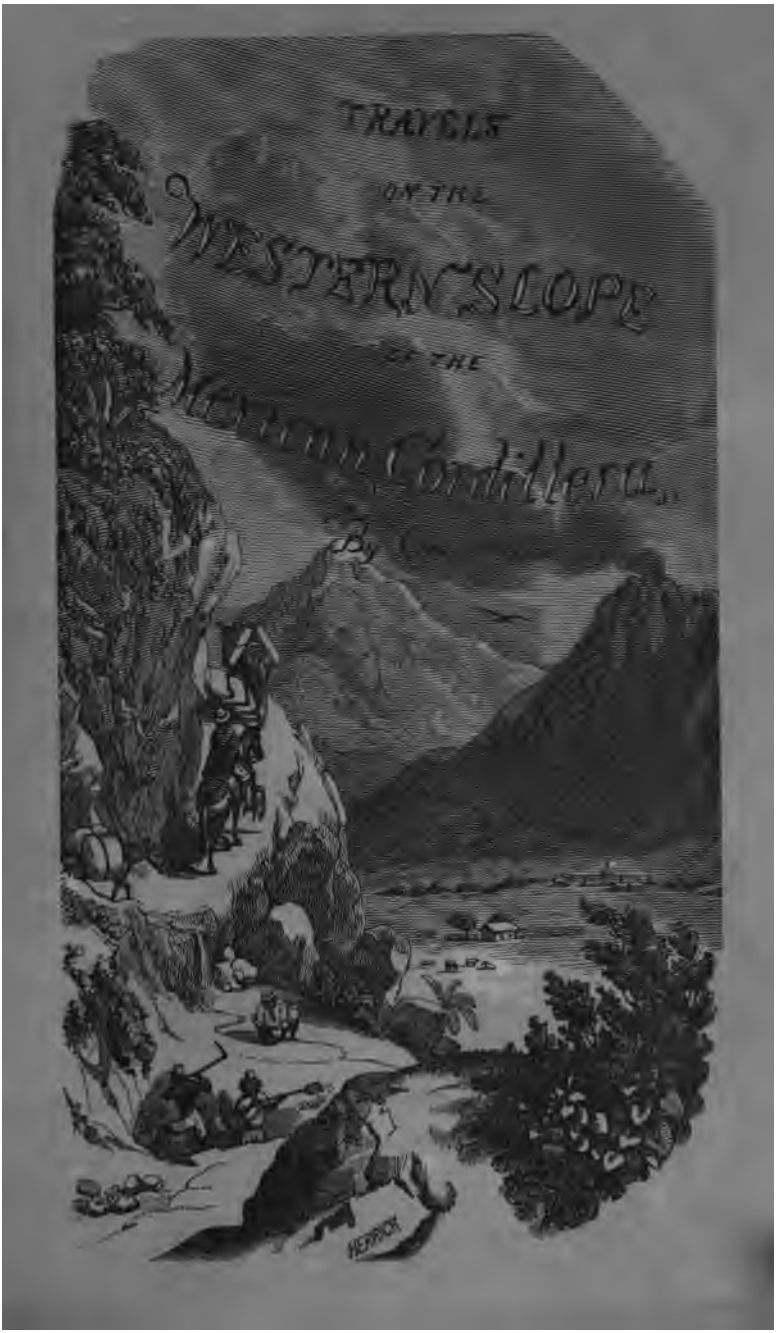
TRAVELS
ON THE
WESTERN SLOPE
OF THE
By
HEPPLE

TRAVELS

ON THE

WESTERN SLOPE

OF THE

MEXICAN CORDILLERA,

IN THE FORM OF

FIFTY-ONE LETTERS,

DESCRIPTIVE OF MUCH OF THIS PORTION OF THE REPUBLIC OF MEXICO; OF SOME OF ITS CHIEF CITIES AND TOWNS; OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL ASPECT AND TOPOGRAPHICAL FEATURES OF THAT REGION; AND OF ITS PRODUCTIONS AND CAPABILITIES, EMBRACING ITS COMMERCE, AGRICULTURE, MANUFACTURES, INDUSTRY, MINERAL AND FOREST RESOURCES; AS WELL AS THE

MANNERS AND CUSTOMS OF THE PEOPLE.

BY CINCINNATUS.

SAN FRANCISCO:
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PREFACE.

In the narration of events, scenes, or objects, an intent, paramount to all others, should be faithfulness and truthfulness; and bearing this impression in mind, it has been my endeavor to picture Western Mexico, not with any overweening notions as to American Destiny, but as it appeared to me during my sojourn, and from information obtained through official reports and surveys which the courtesy of officials and private individuals presented to my notice.

The Report of the joint Commission to survey the boundary line between the two Republics, and the Report of the United States Deputation to survey the Tehuantepec route for a Railroad, in the years 1850 and 1851, in favor of a New Orleans Company, as returned and presented to the two respective Governments, have both come under my observation.

And I beg here to return my acknowledgments for not only having had the privilege of examining those Reports, but the many graphic sketches otherwise forwarded to my consideration and application, for the object of this Work.

Before leaving San Francisco for my Mexican trip, I had presented me, through the Hon. James Van Ness, then Mayor, a letter of introduction from the firm of Bolton, Barron & Co., to that of Echeguren & Co., Mazatlan, which was immediately acknowledged on my arrival, in a manner characteristic of true Mexican Gentlemen. From this firm and several German houses, residents in Mazatlan, I received every attention which I desired; while the former forwarded my purposes by the way of introductions where ever I traveled; thus promoting the means of my gaining information, the aggregate of which, I beg here to present for the consideration of the Public.

CINCINNATUS.

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Comparing the Mineral aspects of Western Mexico to the State of California—Mexicans lack Perseverance—Rivers Flowing into the Pacific—Forest Trees—Grape Vines and Mulberry Trees—Cochineal Insects—Value of Mexican Manufactures per Year—Her Imports and Exports, the amount of the latter and former—Value of Country Estates—Value of City Estates—Amount of Taxation on these Estates—Imposts on Foreign Merchandise—Debt of Mexico—Revenues, how formed—Expenses of the Government per Year—Whole Income—Distressed Condition of the Country People in the region of Durango—Other Computations of the Debt of Mexico—Tehuantepec, the Route of—New Orleans Company constructing a Plank Road across the Isthmus of—Its Advantages over all other Routes, connecting the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, saving One-Third of the Time in Travel, and the Distance of Seventeen Hundred Miles—This, a Capital Investment—Tends to induce Immigration into California—Past Experience as to other Routes for Years elapsed since Steamboat Navigation began on the Pacific—Travel to the Pacific Coast—Tehuantepec Territory—Composed of—Its Area—La Ventosa—Its Heat—Its Plain near—Rivers of the Southern Division—The Surface—The Lagoons—The Soil—Its Towns—The Distance across—Practicable as the San Blas and Vera Cruz Stage Road—Its Grade—Different Points—Capital to open the Road—Rivers to be Bridged—Towns in the Middle Division—Its Climate—Air and Water pure—Rainy Season—Boca del Monte—Paso Malo—Rivers Navigable—Northern Division of the Isthmus—Its chief River, with its affluents—River Bottoms—Towns of this Division—Soil—Productions—Export of Acayucan—Healthy Climate—Forests—Gold—Energy required—Metals—Climate throughout the Isthmus—Spaniards—Creoles—Indians—Zoology of Tehuantepec—Sketch of its Vegetable Kingdom—Similar Productions throughout the Tropics of America—Americans called Filibusters—Americans in Mexico—Burial Places—View of the Relations between the Republics of North America—That of the Enterprise of the United States of America—Review of Anahuac—Policy of Spain in the New Government—Spanish Motives—Form of the New Government—Fate of past Nations uniting Church and State—Destiny of such at present—Propriety of Religion—Good in its Peculiar, Social, and Moralizing Sphere—Object of these Letters—Contracted Notions—Progress of Mexico since the Conquest—Indian Bands—Human Sacrifices—Importers of Light and Knowledge—Consequences thereof...PAGE 384.

LETTERS ON WESTERN MEXICO.

LETTER I.

The Introduction—A Sea Voyage to Mazatlan, Mexico—Incidents—American Passengers—Their Intentions—Conversation of the Mixed Characteristics—Antipathy against Americans—Reasoned with them—An Intelligent Mexican—Spending time at Sea—American Gamblers—Police Inquiries.

AMIGO MIO:—Ever ready to sacrifice ease to be of service, and the means of communicating information, you will please have the kind indulgence to excuse my extending to you these many letters.

The object of these is to impart much of that light respecting a country which, geographically, possesses a most lively interest to Americans.

On Sunday morning, February 12th, of the present year, (1856) when nature seemed invigorated by the freshness of the past night, the green shade of morn appeared upon the hill-tops, and the sun arose in his pristine splendor, and lit up the dusky clouds.

My passage having been secured a few days previous, on the hermaphrodite brig Arizona, Capt. Newman in command, she hoisted anchor and made sail; and bidding adieu to the metropolis of California—San Francisco—she passed gracefully out the Golden Gate, and the helmsman

gently turned her course to the port of her destination—Mazatlan, Mexico.

The breeze was light till the fifth day, when the wind arose from the north-east, and continued with slight intermission up to the 21st of February. The period of these five days was that of dull monotony, and it could have been appreciated much more on land, even in the forest wild, than in this slow sailer, dragging her clumsy length along. In looking over the passenger list, I observed there were twelve cabin passengers, bound for various parts of Mexico. They were Americans, and with various pursuits in mind; some merchants, mechanics, gamblers, and one lawyer accompanied by an American lady. The lawyer I afterwards saw in Guadalajara, near two hundred and fifty miles from San Blas, inland. It was his intention to remain some time in the country, to acquaint himself with its laws and the municipal regulations of its towns and cities. If my memory serves me right, there were twenty steerage passengers; consisting of Mexicans, Spaniards, Italians, Frenchmen, and also a few Mexican señoras. Their conversation ran much upon California—the success they had met with—the many hair-breadth escapes—the treatment of Americans towards them, and the general feelings manifested by Americans against Mexicans and native Californians, in the State of California.

Frequently I reasoned with them, admitting some facts which were too glaring to be hidden by any of the lenient rules of sophism; but taking every advantage which courtesy in argument could possibly afford, to make the American character in California appear as reputable as the force of circumstances would consistently permit, or bear. Never being sea-sick, the second day out from the Golden Gate, and as we were sailing along under a light wind, I became acquainted with an intelligent Mexican, who had

passed several years in California, but without success. He related many incidents concerning his adventures and pursuits in California, and his endeavors to make money; but he noticed that his plans were anticipated, and himself circumvented by some seemingly unobserving Americans. He concluded very justly, that there was no particular necessity for Mexicans to emigrate from their native country; for out of it, away from their institutions and laws, they could scarcely act so as to cope with the business men of the world.

Every day I passed several hours with this gentleman in conversation, and reading Spanish, and he in reading English to me. In this way we improved each other in acquiring what is of reciprocal utility, and husbanded that time which is too often turned to a dead account. And thus we placed a true value upon the passing moments, while many prided themselves upon taking oaths and playing cards, that they might the more aptly, adapt themselves to Mexican habits and customs.

Here let me be candid and anticipate ere I pass on: Let no American gamblers come into Mexico with the vain hope of ultimate success in that pursuit, or of meeting with a cordial recognition in the better circle of society; for here in the land of strangers, and prejudice against foreigners, their names sound even worse than at home; and the police, when an opportunity presents, hunt them down with unceasing perseverance in most parts. There were two noted gamblers on board of the brig; one from Marysville, and the other from Sacramento city, who, on arriving at Mazatlan, took lodgings, and soon assumed their peculiar characteristics. The police and the most respectable citizens, shortly after our landing, made inquiries of the captain respecting the habits of the passengers; for

such an officer is usually expected to discover something of them on a long passage.

This I will mention more fully when speaking of our sojourn in the city of Mazatlan.

Adios,

Señor,

AGRICOLA.

CINCINNATUS.

LETTER II.

Island of Magdalena—Shipwreck there—Cape St. Lucas—Coast of Lower California—Valley of San Jose of California Baja, its Fruits and Productions—La Paz, the Capital of California Baja—La Paz Pearl Fishery—Coarse Salt—Imprisonment of an Englishman of the Cape—Distance from the Cape to Mazatlan—Met a Whaler at Sea near the Cape—A Sea Voyage Tedious.

AMIGO MIO:—Again I fear that I may trespass upon your kind patience in the further consideration of my journal. Not far above Cape St. Lucas (near 130 miles) we passed the noted island of Magdalena, between which and the coast, and near the island, the ill-fated Independence was wrecked, with her freight of human flesh, to rescue itself the best it could from the lashing and tumultuous wave upon wave.

Of this disaster, and of the passengers, much have I heard in foreign parts; and there the tear of sympathy and the hand of charity have been blended together to succor and comfort the distressed on this occasion.

On the 22d of February, about noon, we were nearly opposite to Cape St. Lucas. Light winds prevailed near the cape, and we found it much warmer than usual; the thermometer standing at 80 degrees of Farhenheit. This out from land, was a great change in the climate from what we had experienced in sailing down the coast. The whole coast of Lower California is generally abrupt and barren, with few inlets and green landscapes to attract the eye of the voyager.

From the Island of Magdelena to the cape, it presents a forbidding aspect, being jagged in its general outlines; though directly behind the cape, and within forty miles is the renowned *valley of San José* of Lower California.

This valley is rich in pasturage, and in the production

of fruits, and being somewhat capacious, it supplies the market of Mazatlan with fresh grapes, far sweeter than those grown at Los Angelos, in the State of California; also oranges, limes, raisins, dried figs, tallow and hides. At La Paz, in Lower California, pearl-fishery is extensively pursued, and that too, with profit to the most of those engaged in that avocation.

La Paz is the seat of government of Lower California, notwithstanding it is small, and its site sandy; and were it not for pearl-fishery it would be little known, nor ever would it have gained its present commercial importance. Large quantities of coarse and pure salt, of a fine saline quality, are obtained from near La Paz, on small islands in the Gulf of California, and shipped directly to San Francisco, and also to Mazatlan and San Blas. When near the cape, I was informed that an Englishman lived there, and had for many years; that he not unfrequently acted in the capacity of pilot to vessels desiring to touch at the Cape, and also in that of vender of ship supplies when needed, no matter what national flag might wish them.

For the simple act of supplying an American vessel with some provisions, he was seized and thrown into prison, by the order of the Governor of Lower California, Blancarte; though prior to this, he was ordered by the Governor not to succor any American vessel coming into port, even should she be in distress. Perhaps some palliation may be extended for this want of humanity and courtesy on the part of the Governor, as it was then rather a fillibustering period about the Cape. It is near two hundred miles from the Cape to Mazatlan, and the direction is mostly east. The mouth of the Gulf occupies this distance, and looks ocean-like. It is not unfrequently rough, yet small sail-boats cross it every week, going to or from Mazatlan. On the 23d we sailed along under a light wind, and last night we encountered a whaler off the Cape. We rounded to,

and slackening sail, passed near enough to salute him, and found that he was on his whaling ground. We did not learn that he had as yet met with much success, but since I have been informed that it is quite common for whalers to do well in the vicinity of this latitude. Near midnight, the wind arose and continued till ten o'clock to-day, when it appeared like rain, which appearance did not pass off without giving us a fine shower. It modified the sultriness of the air, and invigorated much our physical systems, and sharpened, in no small degree, our mental capacities. On the 24th of February at 12 o'clock, we were near one hundred miles from Mazatlan; it rained most of the night and part of the next day. The wind was light and from the west; though shifting. Nothing, as to a sea voyage, is more painful than to be becalmed out on the ocean, in a low lattitude. It is really enough, on a sailing vessel, to test most amply the patience of a stoic philosopher. When contemplating the pleasure of taking a sea voyage, it is well to supply one's self with useful books, that time may not hang heavily, but be beneficially spent in storing the mind with the treasures of literature. It is really an unexpected draw upon patience to be cooped up in a small brig, with a scanty and unpalatable allowance, and that too, for many days, where uncontrolled actions strongly indicate the propensities which rule man in a rude state of society.

By this time the passengers became much wearied from the length of the voyage, the smallness of the cabin, and its want of ventilation, and their unexpected fare, as also from the leaky condition of their berths, and common humidity of the vessel.

Adios,

Señor,

AGRICOLA.

CINCINNATUS.

LETTER III.

Captain of the Brig Arizona—Steering for the Port of Mazatlan—Cloudy Peaks—Apprehension for our safety—Landscape aspect near the Port—Arrival in Port—Custom House Officers—Courteous conduct of these Officers—Description of the Port of Mazatlan, its apparent capacity and safety—City of Mazatlan, its site—Fort commanding the City—Streets of the City—Stores—Gold and Silver Coin.

AMIGO MIO:—I must confess that I manifest a strong propensity as to letter writing, yet it is by the medium of travel that we gain accurate information respecting foreign countries.

With reference to our passage, the Captain was attentive to his duties in the navigation of the brig, good-natured, taciturn, and rather *slow* to *hear*; but he wanted a considerable more self control and respect to have the domestic affairs properly administered on board. We expected to arrive in port on the 25th of February, as the wind was fresh and drove us along near due east. It is necessary at this time of the year to steer above the port of Mazatlan, that the vessel may run down, for if she happens to touch far below it usually takes her much time to retrace her position.

At the dawn of day, February 25th, land was quite apparent; though the mountainous peaks and high hills in proximity to the city of Mazatlan, seemed to be hung with misty clouds, which shed their influence far out on the ocean. We were at eight o'clock within ten miles of the city, and possessed of strong feelings and presentiments as to drawing nearer and disembarking; for the tales we had

read of this strange country, from our earliest day to this, arose slowly to mind and awakened rather a fearful apprehension for our safety, during our sojourn in this Republic. It was rainy and cloudy, and slight winds, mostly from the south-west, prevailed in our drawing near the port.

The mountain ranges became quite conspicuous; the coast iron-bound with a few inlets; and the whole landscape with valleys and mountains promiscuously arranged, presented to the wearied voyager a grand and imposing scenery, and a most beautiful and enchanting green, from the fresh rains which nature was then shedding over them. Notwithstanding this range, small sugar-loaf mountains rose frequently near and in the distance, to break the monotony of a continuous scene. At eleven o'clock we arrived in port, and shortly afterwards we were boarded by custom house officers, who to all appearance, were business-like men, and so far as I could observe, we were treated in no manner unbecoming a *great power*. Our passports were not demanded, no unreasonable search was made, and scarcely any delay to our disembarkation was offered; and in fact, I could really see no difference between the treatment of Americans here, and on the Hawaiian Islands; though, but of late, a band of fearless adventurers were made to pass through this country to the Capital, in a wretched and degraded manner.

The port of Mazatlan is not capacious, nor surrounded by those safe land-marks characteristic of many of the ports upon the Pacific coast. A southerly wind, or a south-wester I should imagine would prove somewhat disastrous to shipping, as the land is low on the south-east, and on the south-west open mostly to the ocean. The inner harbor is far from admitting heavy merchant vessels, like the clipper ships arriving in the port of San Francisco; though safely the ocean steamers approach and retreat to pursue their

CITY AND HARBOR OF MAZATLAN.

In the foreground of this cut of Mazatlan may be seen a number of small houses built of sticks, reeds, and adobes, with roofs somewhat cone-shaped, and thatched with palm leaves; while in the middle of the engraving, but less conspicuous, is seen the best portion of the city; and beyond are seen the harbor and high promontory, which I have already noticed, and which I shall soon mention more particularly

onward course when touching into this port. Large ships anchor under the lee of the Island of Creston, which is rather small, but much elevated. In this harbor there are two other islands, that of Venado and Pajaros. During the rainy season the same winds prevail here as at San Blas, and the same dangers as to being driven ashore, detract much from its commercial position and advantages.

The city of Mazatlan is nearly surrounded by water, a mere tongue connecting it to the main land. Near the water's edge and back half of a mile, the surface of the site is even, and also to the limit of the city, from the fort on the west, for more than a mile eastward; yet back farther it is uneven and ungraded. The *Fort* commanding the inner harbor to the city is located on the side of an elevation of near 1500 feet, and on the summit of this, one can take into view mountain peaks, capt. with hoary rocks and mounds; low hills, and undulating valleys both green and beautiful. At this fort there are several cannons planted, ranging, one would imagine, nearly half mast of a ship; yet it is *really supposed* that *even these national* guns might do *execution.*

The streets of the city are not laid out regularly, but turned and changed as fancy and prejudice might prompt different parties to act; though there is one main street which leads out into the country, and on which are situated most of the retail stores; and many of them do a large business. The wholesale stores occupy a place on streets near the mole, and on those but a short distance in the rear. Of all kinds of stores and shops for selling goods, provisions, liquors, and vegetables in the city of Mazatlan, the number may not exceed five hundred.

The exchange made use of here is gold and silver coin, and some gold dust is brought in. The doubloons are well

executed and have about them a peculiar attraction; the silver coin has not that neat appearance which the coin in the United States usually presents.

Adios,

Señor,

AGRICOLA.

CINCINNATUS.

LETTER IV.

City Dwellings—Floors Carpeted—Mats—Roofs—Style of Architecture—Houses furnished—Goods Imported—Carts and Wagons—Dr. Beaven, his carriage—Streets Paved—Side-Walks.

AMIGO MIO:—If I did not conceive some utility in thus communicating to you fully what has fallen, and is falling under my notice, I should observe a certain degree of taciturnity. Concerning the buildings in the city, I have seen some made of stones, though the chief material is soft-burnt bricks, of one foot square, yet some adobes are used by the poorer classes for the construction of their huts in the suburbs of the city. Most of the dwellings are one story, being ten feet between the joists, but some foreigners and Mexicans of late, have erected two story dwellings and stores; yet this is quite rare here. Buildings are put up in a very rough manner, and plastered inside and out, though after having been brought to a plumb line; they are then penciled off into squares, which gives them rather an attractive, but still an illusory appearance.

The floors and roofs are made of brick. For the floor, the ground is raised and the surface leveled, and then the bricks are laid in a cement, which makes the floors very durable, and cool in summer. When it is desired that the floors should be carpeted, wool or common cotton is laid down first, and then the carpet; by which means the carpet is kept from wearing out so fast, and is made pliable. Among the poorer classes, the floors are not carpeted

usually, but a native mat is used, which rather gives the appearance of political economy in a country of so much prodigality.

Heavy joists, and close together, are laid across the walls of the building for the roof, and on these, a tight floor of boards is adjusted, and then on this, bricks are mechanically laid to the amount of one foot in thickness, and carefully cemented over so as to make the roof thoroughly water-tight. This kind of a roof is well adapted to the tropics, as are also the walls of the buildings, which are commonly three feet thick. In such houses one never feels oppressed by heat, nor affected by cold, but can always sleep well at night. I am not aware that I commonly discovered any particular mechanical skill in the construction of the buildings in this city, nor much good taste. The style of architecture is rather mixed with that of the *Moorish* and *Gothic*, scarcely indicating any of the national peculiarities. The doors are clumsy and large, and are generally fastened on the inside by wooden bars; and the windows have mostly iron gratings of three quarters of an inch in diameter, and sometimes shutters. Glass windows are not common only among the better classes, and the iron gratings to all rather impress a foreigner with the idea of being in a city of prisons, than in that of freedom of speech, or locomotion.

The inside walls are frequently papered, and that in the French style, with French paper; and the parlors of the rich are elegantly and tastefully supplied with French chairs, centre-tables, sofas, pianos, mirrors, Turkey carpets, mats, &c., &c., and in fact, with all such, houses are furnished which would constitute *well-arranged* mansions in the United States, or in Europe. Also as much attention to the comforts of the sleeping apartments, I imagine, is paid in this Republic, among the better class of Mexicans,

as in the United States or Europe, among the same class.

Most of the goods sold here are imported directly from Europe; and German houses seem rather to take the lead in commercial pursuits throughout the country. Gold, silver, copper and dye-woods are shipped to Europe in payment for these goods. Log-wood is in great abundance in the rear of Mazatlan, and to no great distance. Many ship loads are packed in on mules and *burros*, which go grunting along the streets, as if keeping time to their slow and steady march. Frequently I have seen one hundred in a train, passing on to the point of deposing their weighty loads. *Burros* are made use of for packing mortar, bricks, lumber, &c., from house to house, and place to place, about the streets, instead of drays; though of late years, and since the war with the United States, a two-wheeled cart has come into use, and also some wagons drawn by mules, harnessed in the usual manner of other countries.

As yet, I have seen but one four-wheeled carriage in the city, which is owned by Dr. Beaven, a druggist, from the State of Kentucky. This gentleman has practiced his profession some fifteen years, in this town and region of country, not *distant more than one hundred leagues*. He has been truly successful and is now living in comparative affluence; and having some years ago married a Mexican lady, he seems to get along *smartly*, by identifying himself with the welfare of the country; though encompassed and nurtured in the midst of revolution. The Doctor seldom rides in his carriage as the streets are not well adapted to this kind of pleasure, and as a carriage road does not extend far into the country. The streets are mostly paved with round cobble stones, and in a concave form, so that the water may drain off in the centre of the street; these stones are laid in cement and become quite firm, so that they are not easily misplaced, except during the rainy

season. The sidewalks are narrow; some are made of timbers hewn and laid, so that two persons can walk side by side; others are constructed of soft-burnt bricks, and also flag stones. On any of them but two persons can walk together, and generally when met in this manner, some of the party step from the sidewalk on the street, to effect the passing.

Adios,

Señor,

AGRICOLA.

CINCINNATUS.

LETTER V.

Government Buildings—Eave-Spouts—Church—Mexican Architecture—French Hotels—Horticulture in the City—Mexican Ladies—Fruits—Plaza Publica—Market Time—The Country People or Paisanos—Provisions and Vegetables.

AMIGO MIO—Every thing here being so different from what it is in the United States, there seems to an observer of events and scenes, an ample scope to enter into, for the purpose of imparting information of interest and worth.

The Government buildings, such as the Custom-houses of foreign and inland duties, forts, arsenals, and the custom house for the reception of goods being inspected before the foreign duties are paid, are, for the most part, well constructed, capacious, airy, and remarkably adapted to the torrid zone. These, as well as private buildings, have a species, or rather kind, of eave-spouts, which, in the rainy season scarcely extend the dripping waters from the side-walks. This, in the United States, would seem like a great inconvenience and nuisance to foot bipeds in passing along on the side-walks. Here many a time, I have seen, by this means, a starched collar and pleated ruffle laid low in moisture, to cool off the imagination, as the wearer rapidly walked along, intently pursuing his object.

There is but one church in Mazatlan, and this is not very large; though sufficiently so to hold the church-going citizens. But few of the gentlemen attend church, and scarcely any of the foreigners. This subject I shall allude to when

speaking of the manners and customs of this people, in another part of these letters.

What adds most to the Mexican composite architecture, consists in the beautiful construction of arches and columns, and these are not uncommon to the better class of buildings facing the streets, or inside of the court-yards, both for the first and second stories. They rather impress a stranger with the attractive order and grandeur of Spanish architecture.

In the city of Mazatlan, I have yet seen but two hotels; and these are kept by Frenchmen, who charge enough, ($14 per week) and have many changes of plates, but more gas than sauce. In fact, such hotels in California would receive no patronage, and would not here, were it not necessary for travelers to resort to some public inn till they become acquainted. The French are quite noted for hotel keeping throughout the Republic; and it is equally notorious to American travelers in Mexico, that, with a few praiseworthy exceptions, they are the meanest and most parsimonious hosts who have ever chanced to grace an inn, or a caravansary. In such hosts, there is one thread only uniting them to existence; and this deranged, their whole system would evaporate like the morning dew. A good hotel in Mazatlan is much needed; and if kept upon a plan, so as to use freely such articles and provisions as the market affords, the traveling community would have but little reason to complain. Scarcely any attention is paid to horticulture by the citizens at their private residences; though inside of the court-yards, flowering shrubs, rose bushes, the myrtle, the hyacinth and the trailing vine, &c., &c., yet in small variety, are not unfrequently seen, trained by the snowy hand of some delicate, blushing maid. From what I have been able to observe of Mexican ladies in this particular, I am disposed to give them much credit for their

delicate and refined taste, as to the adjustment of flowers and plants.

Fruits of those kinds which would grow well in proximity to the city, are rarely cultivated, either for ornament, beauty or use; notwithstanding, the public plaza is now tastefully laid out, with seats on the sides of the square, made of brick; having brick backs and painted red, with brick walks through the centre, coinciding with either point of the compass, and with a circular brick walk inside the seats around the whole circuit of the plaza; and to enhance the beauty of this, every fifteen feet, orange trees are set on the inside edge of this circular walk, which truly adds a graceful beauty to the whole scene. Still to complete this picture in the mind, in the centre of the plaza *imagine* a beautiful fountain of crystal water, such as of the gods of yore, playing jetfully and mirthfully in the golden rays of the sun by day, or at night in the starry or silver moon beams. Sunday morning, and before church time, is the particular juncture of time for Mexican countrymen, living at a distance in the interior. These boors come into town on Saturday, and having adjusted themselves for the occasion Saturday evening, both male and female, on the market ground, they remain there till morning, when a lively trade springs up by the citizens, or their servants, flocking to the market square, like so many hounds pursuing the sly fox or the lone hare, and purchasing articles and provisions, vegetables and fruits, to do them a week.

Corn, beans, Irish potatoes, sweet potatoes, eggs, red peppers, bananas, plantains, oranges, limes, several species of custard apples, squashes, pumpkins, water melons, musk melons, chickens, turkies, and a variety of gallinaceous birds, such as the "hoco or curasson," penelopes and pheasants; also, crockery ware, chairs, and other articles of artistical skill and workmanship, compose not unfrequently what are

brought in to supply a Mexican market. If any of these productions or articles find no sale after the demand of the morning has passed, there are no few hucksters near at hand, like starved buzzards, ready to purchase at a reduced price the balance unsold of the countrymen's labor, and vend this purchase through the week, to those who are unable to buy more than a day's supply ahead. The general prices of these provisions and articles, range nearly the same as in the cities of New York and New Orleans in the United States.

Adios,

Señor,

AGRICOLA.

CINCINNATUS.

LETTER VI.

Amusements—Promenading in La Plaza Publica—The Scenery—Commercial importance of Mazatlan, its destiny, its trade to the Interior and up the Gulf—Mexican trails—Rainy Season—Flour and Flour Mills—Exports and Imports as applied to Home trade—This Policy—Foreign Duties.

AMIGO MIO—Knowing your inordinate thirst for information touching distant countries, and feeling not unfrequently lonely, it is a pleasure to associate with an esteemed friend, when I enter the thick walls of my apartment and contemplate home,—the land of telegraph and steam!

Though there is no theatre, no museum, no menagerie of animals, high or low, in Mazatlan, ladies and gentlemen come into the plaza of a light star or moon light night, to delight each others' ears in the revelry of sound—to tell here the tale of sympathy, and perhaps of affection, and vow before their God a mutual and confiding promise. Here too, they promenade till a late hour, enjoying the beauty of the scene, the fragrance of the orange trees, gently wafted on the softened breeze; and these decked in blossoms of milky whiteness, and the roar of the ocean lashing the shelving shore.

Here too, the eye is cast upon distant landscapes and mountain peaks, which impress the observer with pleasure and admiration. Here too, I have frequently walked while in the city, contemplating the promenading scene of ladies and gentlemen around me, the beautiful exhibition of na-

ture here and inland, and the event of annexing Lower California, Sonora and Cinaloa, by the consent of this Government and purchase, to the United States of the North.

Mazatlan is now a commanding commercial town, of a rapidly growing importance to the States of Cinaloa, Sonora, Lower California, Chihuahua, Durango, and the northern part of Jalisco. Take your imaginary stand, amigo, on some elevated point near this city, and cast your eyes southeast, east, northeast, north, northwest, and behold the vast regions of agricultural, grazing and mining lands as yet untouched! The trade supplying that region mostly flows from Mazatlan, and in return she receives the natural and artifical wealth of those parts, which will continually fill her coffers with an abundance of treasure.

This city has but few equals geographically, and is destined, at no distant day, as light breaks in upon this benighted land, to assume greater advantages—to invite to her municipal confines a more intelligent people, and finally stand without a rival on the Pacific coast! Sailing vessels go now leisurely and steadily up the Gulf of California, instead of steam, taking the productions of the South; such as sugar, coffee, rice and tobacco, with foreign and domestic merchandise, and exchange these for flour, fruits, gold, silver, copper, pearls, salt, hides and tallow. Some considerable sugar, rice, cotton, corn, beans, onions, garlics and tropical fruits, are produced in the rear of Mazatlan; also, gold, silver and copper mines are worked advantageously. Grazing is also a great object of pursuit, both in the State of Cinaloa and that of Sonora.

This city commands the trade and supplies the wants of the country people and the inland towns, in a two-thirds circle from two hundred to one thousand miles, in the vast interior. Rich merchants come in from the country with pack trains, who have extensive haciendas, gold or silver

mines, or who are exclusively engaged in commercial pursuits. To behold these trains coming into town, would remind one of a striking resemblance to a caravan traveling in the East, if one should be pre-disposed to indulge in a lively flight of the imagination. Trains after trains of mules, loaded with agricultural and mineral productions, come in to pay for goods purchased here; and much the largest proportion of these productions is shipped to foreign ports. Thus, a lively exchange, both domestic and foreign, is kept up, and continues most of the year, except during the rainy season. Then the roads, or rather trails, become worse than in California; for the rivers and rivulets assume a frightful appearance, being for the most part without bridges. The rainy season commonly includes the months of June, July, August, September, and a part of October; and, during most of this time, it rains a little nearly every day.

Most of the flour used in the cities of Mazatlan, Tepic, and Colima, and the ports of San Blas and Manzanillo, is exported from Guaymas, in the State of Sonora, where the merchants purchase the wheat from the interior; and some of them having flour mills, for commercial and neighborhood convenience, the wheat is ground and packed in sacks of one hundred pounds, and exported not to foreign, but home ports. The flour is nearly as white, possessing the same qualities, as California flour.

The terms export and import being mentioned here to indicate the transaction of business in the same Republic, may sound harsh and unharmonious to our ears; for goods, agricultural commodities of whatsoever kind, being shipped from one seaport town to another, no difference if they are natural productions; they are however subject to a heavy duty, to be paid at the port of disembarkation; and this goes to the State and municipal coffers. And further in

this respect, I have to add, that foreign goods, having once paid the government import dues at the port of entry, for the town in the interior, are still subject to an increaseed inland duty in case the merchant finds it to his interest and advantage commercially, to remove them to other towns and cities. The home duties, and foreign duties once paid, it seems to Americans most unnatural, and impolitic in the art of government to re-demand the same, as there is scarcely any encouragement left or presented to induce home industry and commerce. The interior duty touches every article brought into market for sale, which it becomes necessary to pay or leave a pledge at La Garita, just before entering the city. Gold coin or dust, coming in to be shipped to foreign ports, pays four per cent., and silver coin ten per cent. inland duty, under the early part of the administration of 1856, and many previous ones. As for instances of home duties, the few I am now to mention, will serve to demonstrate how unjustly they grind the face of the industrious producers. When a dozen of eggs, a chicken, a hen, or any of the gallinaceous tribe, Chili pepper, or vegetables of any kind, or a burro load of charcoal, which is commonly used in all Mexican towns for cooking, are brought into *town* from the interior, or out of the city limits, the vender has to pay a small duty, which goes to the support of the corporation and government; while the rich man, owning thousands of acres of land, and cattle, and mines, is scarcely aware of the influence of direct taxation. This policy, as well as many other illiberal regulations with reference to inland duties, and also foreign, will, I presume, be eventually removed by the *anticipating* and sagacious mind of Comonfort. The seaport or foreign duties are much higher than they should be to promote a healthful interchange of commerce, being from fifty to one hundred per cent. on the first cost, on many

articles, besides which, some articles, under different administrations, meet with a total prohibition; such as flour, sugar, coffee, and not unfrequently, tea and tobacco.

Adios,

Señor,

AGRICOLA.

CINCINNATUS.

LETTER VII.

The general Influence of heavy Imposts—Bribing Custon House Officers—Peculiar Position of Mazatlan, its Railroad destiny.

AMIGO MIO:—Mentioning in my former letter the extraordinary duties imposed by the Mexican Government upon her tax-ridden people; one would suppose that it would sap the foundation of commercial pursuits, or at least, a legitimate application of them. This measure is well conceived to impoverish the lower classes, and enrich the higher, for there is scarcely any tax upon real estate, of whatsoever kind. These enormous duties and prohibitions have led, many times, to peculation and malfeasance in the faithful discharge of official obligations, as the extensive importer is sure to banter the custom-house officers, in order to effect a diminution of the import dues. This, when resorted to, is arranged between the parties most generally as follows: The consignee appropriates to himself one-half of the custom-house dues; one-fourth goes to the custom-house officer, and one-fourth to the Government; and then to complete the climax of shrewd maneuvering, the consignee charges the whole import duties to the *home* merchant, or shipper. This, in Mexico, is called keen Yankee *wiring*. *Whereas* the duty is fifty per cent. on five hundred thousand or a million of dollars worth of merchandise, which amount some of the merchants of this city have yearly sent to them from Europe, to be sold on commission; it becomes a great and important object, and more especially to the importer, or

consignee, to retrench as much as possible, this enormous sum flowing into the government treasury. Sometimes tobacco is prohibited, and at other times it is passed under a medium duty, and then again, it is nearly exempt from duty. Recently I was jocosely told by a merchant speculator, who had sent to the United States for a large supply of this commodity, that before his cargo arrived, modifications in the tariff had taken place, and that upon tobacco was put so high that the government import duty nearly absorbed the consular or commercial valuation of the tobacco. In such a case, common justice and equity would require a time given ahead for the repeal of such laws to take effect, which should, in all cases, be a reasonable time, for the encouragement and promotion of commerce.

By good authority, I have been told that bribery, with reference to custom-house concernments, has been commonly and boldly resorted to, and that the custom-house officers have largely shared in the spoils of the government; reasoning thus: That the present would be the best opportunity to swindle the government, and appropriate to themselves some of the precious metal. However, since my sojourn here, I have been informed that the President of the Republic, Gen. Comonfort, has exercised much penetration and forecast, in appointing to such posts gentlemen of tried and faithful integrity. One or two instances of an attempt to bribe have come under my notice while here, and I must confess to you, that I have been much pleased to see manifested a devotional and national respect to the high and all-important interests of the country.

Mazatlan occupies, I am happy to inform you, another geographical position, which, by Americans, is not much known nor regarded at present. From this place to the mouth of el Rio Grande, in Texas, it is near six hundred

miles direct, and I am informed by intelligent gentlemen of different nations, that a railroad from this city to the mouth of that river is wholly practicable, and can be made in passing over the distance of one thousand miles. This route, by gentlemen of mind and knowledge to judge, has been passed over with an eye single to this object; and when one sits down and reflects dispassionately upon the different routes proposed, to link ocean to ocean, it is no more than reasonable to conclude, that at no distant day, the most practicable one will be secured, and that means of a most cogent character are now at work, in a latent manner, in both Republics, to promote and effectuate this *desirable* and national iron band.

Adios,

Señor,

AGRICOLA.

CINCINNATUS.

LETTER VIII.

Consideration of the Arts, Sciences, and Characteristics in Mexico—Mazatlan, a Rival of San Francisco at no distant day—The Extent of her Agricultural, Mineral and Grazing Lands, not far off—Kinds of Vegetables—Milk, Butter—Advantages for Foreigners—Prices of Provisions—El Rio de Rosario, value of Ranchos y Haciendas on it, and in its vicinity—Implements of husbandry.

AMIGO MIO:—However, I am in Mexico, and among a people who have made but little advancement in the arts above their ancestors, or in some respects, the Aztecs; and scarcely any in the sciences since their secession from Spain, and organization into a Republican form of Government. I feel wholly disposed to truthfully represent this people to my fellow-countrymen, for among them in the emphatic sensé, there are ladies and gentlemen of the highest characteristics of virtue and mind.

The city of Mazatlan, in my humble opinion, from my knowledge of this coast, will be, in a few years, the strongest and most powerful rival which San Francisco can possibly encounter, under every consideration of railroad, agricultural, mining, and commercial advantages. The vast extent of fertile land to be cultivated in the rich products of the tropics, lying at every point of the compass, except on the west,—the mining and grazing interests, all now scarcely begun,—do most assuredly give this city no small geographical and topographical considerations.

And its proximity to the Gulf of Mexico, should also be viewed with a careful eye, as possessing strong and unsev-

erable relations to our vast country, lashed by either ocean. Not far from the city, upon high elevations where the land is fertile and vastly productive, as good vegetables and fruits could be grown as in California; but this to a Mexican would seem like labor, to climb the bold ascent and plant the adapted field!

Even on the low land, on a level with the sea, there is not much cultivation, except in a few vegetables to supply the market; the names of which are Irish and sweet potatos, onions, garlics, lettuce, Chili peppers, squashes, water and musk melons, and pumpkins. Tropical fruits come more from the interior. In the market I have usually seen an abundance of eggs sold at one real per sixteen, and the gallinaceous tribe, also at a reasonable price, as in the eastern or western portions of the United States. I saw here no remarkably good vegetables, as possessing a fine flavor; for no care is exercised to change seeds, in order to improve thereby the productions so much longed for, especially by those accustomed to their use and healthful influence. It is rather hard living to most of Californians coming to Mexico, so accustomed as they are to their vegetable life. This month, (March) I saw Irish potatoes grown near the city by a German, who had lived a long time in the neighborhood of the Mission of San José, in the State of California.

They were of the size of a goose egg, and seemed quite eatable, especially where vegetables are hardly to be found. They were worth twelve cents a pound, and so were Irish potatos imported from San Francisco,—yet a few hundred bushels of the latter would abundantly supply the market, at any time.

Seldom did I see much milk in use for culinary purposes; and good butter is comparatively unknown in this market; yet some is sent here from Guaymas, but it is of

a whitish color and almost tasteless, which is also true respecting the cheese which the Mexicans make in various parts of their country.

Lower California furnishes large quantities of this cheese for the market of Mazatlan, and also that of San Francisco. An industrious American might settle in the vicinity of Mazatlan, and following most any pursuit, such as gardening, keeping a dairy, or even agriculture, he would accumulate a snug fortune, and in a short time retire from a close applicancy to business, living in comparative ease and affluence.

Corn is worth from fifty cents to one dollar per bushel; beans nine dollars a mule load, or three hundred pounds; oranges and limes, ten dollars per thousand, which are grown in the interior, and are of a fine quality; sweet potatoes, six to ten cents a pound; beef, pork, and mutton rate in price from six to ten cents a pound; poultry and eggs are worth as much here as in the United States; and other articles of provision bear nearly the same price as in St. Louis and New Orleans.

Horticulture, to embellish the town and add a charm and also increase the center of attraction to home, when the business man is wearied from the exertions of the day; and agriculture to reclaim and reduce a howling wilderness to the radiating effulgence of happy civilization, improving and advancing the prosperity of the country, might be most extensively pursued in Mazatlan, and on the fertile lands in the interior, near el Rio de Rosario, twenty miles southeast of the city.

On this river, and throughout the country land is cheap, and I am informed that un rancho, or rather una hacienda of one, two, or three leagues in extent, can be purchased for the small sum of two, three, or four thousand dollars,

having good improvements for the accommodation of agricultural pursuits.

The implements used in husbandry, consist of a rough structure of an ancient origin; for long before the foundation of Rome by Romulus, or the Trojan war, they must certainly have been in use, and have required no extraordinary stretch of the understanding to have conceived their simple construction. The plow consists of two poles, one six feet long and the other fifteen feet, fastened together by the means of a mortice and tenant at an angle of sixty-five degrees; through and near the end of the short pole there is a pin to steady the plow, and on its end there is attached a pointed iron or steel shoe, to prevent it from readily wearing out. The yoke has no bows, but is fastened on the heads of the cattle by the means of thongs, and so is the tongue of the plow to the yoke. The ground is seldom penetrated more than three inches, and afterwards it is usually bushed over.

Thus in Mexico does agriculture, the basis of national wealth and importance, the hand-maid to prosperity and happiness, the typical Goddess of Liberty and Independence, receive the rare protective care of Genius!

The scythe, the cradle, the sickle, the hoe, and in fact almost every implement of husbandry, as well as that of architecture, appear to an American, accustomed as he is to move these pursuits by locomotive power, and perform in a few days what it would require the Mexicans weeks to accomplish, in a most wasteful manner, like a prostitution of the physical and intellectual powers, which a wise Providence has bestowed upon man for the fulfilment of his mission here below.

However, I heard of a few reaping, threshing, and also winnowing machines, with their appurtenances, having

been introduced into Mexico from the United States, and also that they were highly appreciated by those who saw them applied to work.

Adios,

Senor,

AGRICOLA.

CINCINNATUS.

LETTER IX.

Principles governing Labor—Advantages to a Country to invite Immigration—Maneuvering in Commercial Pursuits—Right of Free Suffrage—Elections—Education—The Amount of Intelligence—Number of Scholars in different Colleges—Number of Persons really Ignorant—Expenses of Public Instruction—Number of Pupils in the City of Mexico—Public Libraries—Progress of Arts and Trades in the Republic.

AMIGO MIO:—The amount of information which it is my purpose, in these many letters, to convey to the public through the medium of you, has been acquired by much travel and observation, both fatiguing and dangerous. The principles which govern labor here and in the United States, are very different, and rather extraordinary. In the former it is a dishonor, and in the latter, it is an honor, to labor. It is thought beneath a white man to labor in the field, or at any mechanical work; therefore this class follow commerce, professions of different kinds, or politics, and neglect the staff, the soul, the spirit of the country's prosperity and happiness.

I have often heard it remarked that one's stock is running out from want of changing the breed; perhaps this might not be inapplicable to the Spanish race in Mexico. A young Mexican of fine education, a man of mind and thought, suggested this view of his country's fair sex to my consideration, and cited the United States with their millions of emigrants from different nations, in proof of this remark or suggestion. A nation for years offering no inducements to others, but marrying and intermarrying

among themselves, and being tenacious of family interests and family alliances,—like individuals, must exhaust that muscle, and nerve, and mind, which nature would impart to them in their liberal interchanges with foreign powers. Therefore, a country to be truly prosperous in every respect, should make immigration and settlement as easy and attractive as possible, or as circumstances might admit of. With regard to commercial pursuits in this city, there is much maneuver, when merchantmen arrive off the coast and near the port, from Europe. Speculation and bantering run somewhat high, though in the under-current, so that a stranger or a casual observer would hardly suspect any change in the commercial atmosphere. It is customary for the captain to hoist a signal to see if all is right on shore; if so, they sail in and anchor; and if not, they ply off and on, communicating with the consignees by the means of concerted signals agreed upon previous to sailing, till arrangements are effected with the custom-house officers. Smuggling goods or bribing officers in Mexico is not usually looked upon with that degree of odium, which is common in other countries; consequently it has been too much in practice here for the wholesome administration of justice, and the rapid and permanent advancement of the country.

Heretofore, one would imagine that the financial principles most attended to and studied here, are no other than for the man in office to cheat the Government; and the latter, in turn, by imposing enormous duties, to cheat or rob the people. And thus this system of "robbing Peter to pay Paul," and "Paul to pay Peter," has been embraced and fondled, till the nation is nearly bankrupt, and her life's blood is made to flow in the banquet halls of her high officials. The great defect in the Mexican government is the extension of the right of free suffrage to all classes, with

scarcely any limitation, in respect to color, *education*, or property. It is impossible for Mexico to flourish long under such auspices; for the theory or principles of well digested governments are scarcely understood by one out of five hundred of the entire voting community. Political and revolutionary elections are moved and set to the minds of the masses, by appeals and prejudices. Where there is little or no knowledge among the governed; where the mind roams in a savage state, just above animal instinct; and where mind is scarcely appreciated by a few, even of the community; the hope of a wholesome government organization rests on a basis too futile to be prosperous. There is no hope for Mexico to survive for many years to come, unless she educates, and this is against her present, as it has been against her past, church policy.

What may be done under new administrations, can be but a slight improvement upon the past, without the force and influence of education.

In comparison with other favored countries, public instruction has received but a small amount of national thought or guardianship, within the Republic of Mexico. As I have often remarked, forms of outward show, rather than the substance of the skeleton, are impressed upon the youth of both sexes, which seldom appeal to their reasons and their judgments comparatively. Out of a population of 8,000,000, it is not presumed by the most discreet Mexican Officials and Reports that more than one in a hundred can read, write, and reason like a Spirit of Intelligence; so that from this population, 80,000 may take a rank among the intelligent of other countries; though they usually lack that physical courage to effect any great-purposes. It is reported that the number of scholars in college in the State of Mexico is not far from 300; in that of La Puebla, 420; in that of Michoacan, 560; in that of Guadalajara,

720; in that of Nuevo Leon, 120; in that of Oajaca, 400; in that of Durango, 200; and in that Chiapa, 180; and with reference to the other States in this respect, I could not, nor have I, up to the present period of time, obtained any satisfactory information; though it may be presumed that the same ratio would issue, based upon nearly the same amount of population, yet this deduction will not always hold good in Mexico.

It is presumed by intelligent Mexicans that three fourths of the population have never been ushered into the light and influence of a spelling-book; hence ignorance and stupidity float in the council halls of the nation. In the city of Gaudalajara, there are two scientific and literary academies; that of Sociedad Filvoatrica, and that of Falangede Estrudo. From the consideration which I have been able to take of Mexican Literatnre, with the narrow means at hand, I feel proud to report that great improvements are now visible, which have been made within a few years, respecting primary and secondary education. The expenses of public instruction are commonly borne by the State Governments and Municipalities; besides in many of the considerable towns, there are schools where the youth are taught, not only to read and write, but many of the higher branches of a Spanish education.

In the city of Mexico, there are 129 public establishments of learning, with 7,200 pupils of both sexes. The establishments dedicated to secondary education in this Repulbic, consist of conciliary seminaries supported and directed by the clergy. The colleges and institutes of learning in the several States are supported by donation funds settled upon them, and by direct appropriations; and the national colleges are also in the same manner; of that class there are ten in the capitals of the bishoprics, and of the latter class, there are six in the city of Mexico, viz: San Ilde-

fonso, San Gregorio, San Juan de Letran, the School of Medicine, the College of Mining, and the Military College; also, three public libraries, viz: that of the Cathedral with 13,000 volumes and manuscripts; that of the University with about 3,000 volumes; that of San Gregorio with more than 11,000; and that of San Juan de Letran with about 11,000 volumes. Of late years some progress in the arts and trades has been attained in this Republic; and in this view, painting, lithography, book-binding, sculpture and engraving on metals, have received some impetus, noting a new era in the national advancement of Mexico; that mechanical industry, in its various departments, has awakened from its slumbers, and imitating foreign skill imported to her shores, it has stamped them upon furniture, carriages, and architecture, plating and jewelry. In the city of Mexico, there is an Academy of Fine Arts, called San Carlos, in honor of Charles III, which sustains a high reputation.

Adios,

Señor,

AGRICOLA.

CINCINNATUS.

LETTER X.

Mode of Travelling in Mexico—Culiacan, the Capital of Cinaloa—Its Importance—Productions about the Capital—Border and Interior Indians—Yaqui Indians—System of Slavery—Character of Indian Servants—Peonage Extinct.

AMIGO MIO:—So far as I have traveled or been able to gain information of those closely connected with different parts of the country, I shall not restrain myself from giving you such particulars as may be of interest.

The mode of travelling generally in Mexico, is on the back of a mule, and little attention is paid to the improvement of trails, or the making or repairing of roads. Out of the city of Mazatlan, there is no road for wagons, carts, or carriages, except to the Presidio of Mazatlan, seven leagues distant, which fortress is now in ruins. The capital of the State of Cinaloa, Culiacan, is situated on a river of the same name, in the midst of a beautiful and rich agricultural country. The population of this city is near 9,000; its streets, with a neat Plaza, are laid out regularly, and it possesses much inland trade. The *mode* of architecture, or rather, the order, is the same as that of Mazatlan. The Plaza, the murmuring rills, the playful fountains, the champaign and mountain scenery, the pines waving their green foliage in the gentle breeze,—all conspire to commingle with new associations of thought, and impress the mind, most vividly, with the beauties and grandeur of

nature in this region of country. This city obtains a considerable importance from being the seat of the State Government; and during the session of the Legislature, it is made the resort of old and shrewd politicians, as the seats of State Governments are in the United States. Where the payment or handling of monies is concerned, I must admit that Mexicans are nearly as shrewd and maneuvering politicians, and lay as many foul means to effect their political ends, as the broken-down, *hag-ridden* politicians not of, but in the State of California.

By the way of the trail, the distance from Mazatlan to Culiacan is over two hundred miles, and the intervening distance between these two cities is rough and mountainous, and but little of the way is embellished by the hand of art in the adjustment and cultivation of ranchos or haciendas. The terms rancho and hacienda are little understood in the United States; rancho means the same as a farm in the northern States, and hacienda the same as a cotton or sugar plantation in the southern States. Cotton, sugar, corn, beans, rice, and vegetables of various kinds, and fruits common to this climate and a low latitude, are grown in great abundance in the vicinity of Culiacan; also mining interests are not neglected. The cultivation of coffee is being introduced into this State; and it would seem to pay well from the fact, that coffee, owing to its being prohibited from importation, is worth thirty cents or more a pound by the wholesale, and by the retail, fifty cents a pound.

The importation of coffee, like that of sugar, rice, wheat, corn, or any of the eatables of life, is forbidden, which one would think, might tend to stimulate the agricultural industry of the country.

Contemplating, as I have been led to make inquiries with reference to Indian tribes in this country, the weak-

ness of the Mexican nation and their want of ability to strike terror, fear and respect in the northern and middle hordes of Indians, with whom they are living in so close contact;—I am informed by an intelligent Mexican that near the Gulf of California, and below Guaymas, on el Rio de Yaqui, there is a tribe of Indians living, wielding much power, who lay an annual tribute upon the Mexicans near them, that cultivate their claimed possessions.

The land on this river is said to be rich, and represented to be unequaled, in the State of Sonora, in point of fertility, and abundant productions, peculiar to that latitude.

It is said that these Indians have never been conquered; and consequently look with a savage contempt upon the prowess and martial spirit of the Mexicans; and for many years these have ceased to wage war on these Indians, with the hope of ultimate success, in the conquest of that productive tract of country. Many of them are rich in stock and lands, making slaves of a certain caste of their own race, like the Hindoos. Slavery does not exist in Mexico in the same sense as in the United States, nor does peonage as is usually understood; but public opinion, associations, and a voluntary recognition, on the part of the colored race, of their inferiority, from the fact of their doing and being coerced by circumstances and long usages, to perform menial services, have indelibly stamped them as a class wholly distinct from the pure Castilian descendants.

To their superiors, these Indians or mixed races seem to readily recognize their true and relative position in domestic avocations, in the same manner as the slaves do at the South. When employed by the day, the month, or the year, they are treated in the same or worse manner at times than the slave, not being allowed any peculiar privileges about the house, which a slave, under like circum-

stances is not entitled to. By the incessant revolutions in this Republic, the *ancient* system of peonage has become extinct; and consequently, it is a matter of great difficulty to carry on an extensive operation of agriculture, as there is no dependence to be reposed in retaining this class in one's employment, when most needed. They take invariably the advantage of necessity, and know no bounds to their demands for wages, till actual want enforces them into a compliance.

Adios,

Señor,

AGRICOLA.

CINCINNATUS.

LETTER XI.

Population of Mazatlan—Wealthy Merchants—Kinds of Goods—Characters of different kinds—City Police—Crimes and Imprisonments—Number of Persons charged with crime per year in the Republic—Different kinds of Crime—Public Imprisonments—Discharging Cargoes of Merchandise—Servants called Cargadors.

AMIGO MIO:—I am not aware that there is any definite mode of arriving at the population of cities, or of political divisions in Mexico, as in the United States; for a general census is seldom taken; therefore the population of this country must, to a great extent, rest upon open supposition. The population of the city of Mazatlan is computed to be 12,000 of all shades; and perhaps, of that number, one twelfth is white and can trace their origin wholly back to their Spanish ancestors. In this city, there are several wealthy merchants of different nations, who import goods largely from Europe; and there are also Mexican capitalists who have extensive ranchos or haciendas in the country, even one hundred miles out, and pass a part of their time in town, and a part on their ranchos or haciendas. English, French and German goods seem to be most used, and generally in demand; and also French brandies and wines; but few articles manufactured in the United States are shipped into any of the Mexican ports on the Pacific. Here I saw professional men, and mechanics, and those of all the common pursuits of life, usually assembled in cities; and none of these I have as yet

heard of being particularly distinguished in their peculiar avocations for skill or talent; however, they all seem to move along passively and unambitiously, and appear comfortably,—to eat and drink, and breathe air, even not unlike a live Yankee. So far as I am able to judge, the municipal laws and regulations of this city are well digested, organized, and executed as effectually, or even more faithfully carried out than is usual for such to be in the United States, in cities of the same amount of population. A good city police is kept up regularly from nine o'clock at night, till twilight the next morning,—and a pleasant quiet and stillness prevail, except the watchmen's shrill cry; which adds much to the pleasure of a family residence here.

Every hour of the night, the watchmen shout and exclaim to the full height of their voice: "all is well," and thus the city vigilance moves on all night. This, at first, seemed intolerable to me, especially, if a brawny watchman took his stand near my window.

He is armed with a polished musket, having a bayonet attached, and is quite firm and determined, as well as undaunted, in the nocturnal discharge of his duty.

During my sojourn of nearly a month in this city, I heard of few crimes being committed within its corporation. A chain gang is common in most of Mexican cities, and is considered a good mode of punishment to prevent the commission of crime; as the public gaze, that frown of mankind upon corruption, though corrupt, seldom fails to strike a damper in the most hardened criminal, and slowly yet steadily subdues that stuborn spirit, which, in a prison never can be touched. To increase crime on the contrary, confine a criminal after his sentence to a *parlor*, give him wine and brandy, and sumptuous repasts through his friends every day; letting the *Grace* and *Beauty* call on him to *soothe* his *wounded heart;* and by this means, one who has

broken and put at *naught* the *laws* of his *country, feels* himself not *degraded* by punishment; and hence *punishment loses* its whole efficacy,—and the moral *tone*, the *spirit* of society, *sinks* to common *profligacy.*

In looking over the criminal statistics of Mexico, I find about twenty-one thousand five hundred and five persons charged with crimes and taken to prison annually; or near one to every four hundred of the entire population; of whom four thousand nine hundred and forty-four have commonly been set at liberty on preliminary trials; seven thousand eight hundred and fifty sentenced according to their crimes; one hundred and twenty-one sent to their respective quarters; eight thousand five hundred and ninety stood ex-acorda, that is, without decisions; and from the whole numbers, six thousand and seventeen were arraigned for quarrels; three thousand and ninety-seven for drunkenness; one thousand one hundred and thirty-eight for vagrancy; two thousand eight hundred and ninety-two for violating police laws; seven hundred and twenty-six for incontinence; one hundred and eighty-one for wounding others; two hundred and forty-one for swindling; three hundred and eighty-nine for suspicion; one hundred and twenty-one for rape; one hundred and forty as fugitives from justice; two hundred and thirty for homicide; twenty-seven as false coiners; twenty-two for pandering; forty for adultery; and five hundred and eleven for carrying arms. This information I have given as I read and heard it; however, it would seem to me from the perusal of the newspaper calendar, that the aforesaid number, per year, would greatly fall short of the actual per centage in the commission of crime.

My object in this tour is to notice and record incidents which may have a tendency to illustrate and demonstrate more fully the habits, manners, customs, laws and usages,

in different parts of the western portion of Mexico, Amigo, than is commonly read from casual observation; and this too, without prejudice against, or bias in favor of, this people. Public improvements are not considered of much consequence here, except those tending absolutely to shelter or protect.

No wharves are built out into the harbor to facilitate the disembarkation of goods; however, two have been begun, but want of *the spirit* prevented any considerable extension. The manner of discharging cargoes arriving in the different Mexican ports on the Pacific, is to make use of a lighter as far as practicable, for the water near the beach is shoal. Then the goods are packed out of the lighter by servants called *cargadors*, into a reception or government store house for inspection. And from this, they are taken to the consignees in different parts of the city; though not till the duty is paid, according to agreement or consular valuation.

Adios,

Señor,

AGRICOLA.

CINCINNATUS.

LETTER XII.

Indian Cargadors, their Saddles for Packing, their Strength, Patience and Endurance—Mixed Castes—Influence of Religion upon the Indians—Arrival and Treatment of Americans—Their objects of Exploration and Settlement.

AMIGO MIO—These servants called *cargadors*, are Indians or mixed breed; and but little or no difference can I see in the color of these Indians and those further north. Often have I been surprised to see the burdens which these cargadors could sustain and walk under; I have been told that some of them could carry four hundred, and even six hundred pounds, a short distance. In carrying these heavy burdens, these cargadors make use of a kind of saddle, consisting of a pliable pad, eighteen inches long, five inches in diameter, and with the form roundish and rather lanceolate. To both ends there is attached an Agave band, near three inches wide, which resembles hemp; this band is just long enough to let the pad fall and rest on the shoulder,—the band extending over the forehead. The cargador, with a load on his shoulders, usually walks half stooped, throwing the burden wholly on the pad. These servants seemed to be possessed of great muscular strength, and of a hardy endurance, living in a manner to awaken our sympathy, notwithstanding they are clearly working out a manifest *destiny*. I saw them carry so much even, that their legs would seem to half bend under the weight, as they walked

along near me; and in this condition, they appeared patient, caring to save only a little for the morrow. From my own observation, I should judge them much more patient in enduring service for others than the Indians of the north. The Indians of the cities are mixed more with the white race, than those inhabiting the mountains; however, many full blooded Indians live in the towns, and usually perform all menial service. The mixed are mechanics of various kinds and perform labor requiring more skill and a greater exercise of reason. Masonry seems to be better understood than mechanism, and in the construction of arches, pillars, and columns, I saw numerous instances of their predilection in this respect. It may, however, result from an innate principle to imitate the peculiarity of many of their partial Moorish ancestors. Without doubt, these Indians are descendants of the Aztec race, who, long before the conquest, had spread themselves over much of Mexico; and, though the bonds of civilization have been thrown around them for more than three hundred years, with Christian grace and teachings, they seem not to have profited much by example, or under such influences. This part, or the Indian character as seen in Mexico where I have traveled, will be touched upon more fully in other and my concluding remarks.

During my stay at the European Hotel in Mazatlan, several intelligent Americans arrived from San Francisco, and remained there a few days. They were received and treated with courtesy and attention, far more than is common for Americans to extend to foreigners. Americans think too much of that Almighty dollar, to pause and notice even general courtesy, till they go to foreign lands and are there taught to blush at their own perverse selfishness. This, however, may be greatly owing to the intellectual peculiarity of their own natural organization. This na-

tional characteristic I should not have mentioned, did I not feel forced to, knowing with how much indifference foreigners, especially Mexicans, are looked upon in the United States, by too large a class of my countrymen, in the way of awarding to Mexican gentlemen the palm of true politeness and forbearance, and that of suppressing in themselves a revenging temper when Americans travel in their country. The Americans alluded to, came hither with the express intention of penetrating Lower California and the State of Sonora, to discover more particularly and geologically the mineral wealth in those regions, and to settle in some part of the country they intended to explore, purchasing *a rancho* or *hacienda*, if found practicable, and the inducements strong enough to remain in the country, and the security of life and property, to all appearance, sufficiently guaranteed.

Adios,

Señor,

AGRICOLA.

CINCINNATUS.

LETTER XIII.

Repeal of Old Laws by Comonfort, and the Privileges thereby gained for Foreigners—Militia of the Country, and its effect—Gen. Castro of Monterey, State of Cal.—Obstinacy of the presiding Governor, Blancarte—Public Schools.

Amigo Mio—Under the administration of Comonfort, old laws disqualifying foreigners from holding real estate have been repealed, and new ones passed, allowing them without taking the oath of allegiance, to hold such property, and be protected in the free use of it, in the same manner as native Mexicans. Foreigners who have not taken the oath of allegiance, have, in this respect, more guaranteed advantages than the Mexicans themselves; for the former do not, by living out of their respective native countries, forfeit their protection, and consequently, in case of revolutions, if their property be seized by the government they can appeal to their respective countries through their several ministers, for indemnification. This repeal and protection, will have a tendency of the utmost importance to resuscitate the country, and introduce a new and important system of agriculture.

With reference to the militia of the country, I was informed that a few companies of soldiers are stationed at the garrison in Mazatlan, and most of the gentlemen with whom I have chanced to converse in this respect, look with a jeal-

ous eye and indifference upon the Mexican regulars, as taking the country together, too large a number by far, for the nation to sustain.

By good authority, I have been informed that forty thousand regulars, with the different grades of officers, are enrolled in the Republic of Mexico, to perform military service when called into the field; which military power and armanent would impoverish and bankrupt a prosperous and flourishing nation; hence what will be the consequence of such an army preying upon the vitals of Mexico?

Recently, I have made the acquaintance of Gen. Castro, of Monterey, in the State of California, and also his private secretary. It appears from his own statement, and that of highly respectable gentlemen of this city, that the President, Gen. Comonfort, appointed, through favor, Gen. Castro, Governor of Lower California, not long since, and in Jan., 1856, he came down to this city, intending to go over to La Paz, the seat of government of Lower California, and assume the reins of government. In this respect he has found himself considerably foiled, and, perhaps, entirely defeated in that object; for the acting Governor of Lower California is an ambitious and go-ahead man, who, having risen from the trade of a common hatter, within a few years, to his present condition, would not be found willing to yield his position of honor, and the easy means of accumulating wealth, without an effort to retain it, and prejudice the Lower Californians against Castro. Therefore Gen. Castro has recently written to the Mexican Government, at the city of Mexico, touching the course he should pursue, and the means he should use to obtain his new appointment. As yet I have not been informed as to the result of the contest of these two gentlemen to the government of Lower California.

In the city of Mazatlan, with a population of 12,000 souls,

I have seen or heard of few schools for either sex; and it is truly painful to a mind accustomed to contemplate the advantages flowing from the reception of a liberal education in the United States; and that this is not, by any means, confined to the rich, to the sons nor the daughters, but is common to all who will—to see here man, noble by nature, so little cultivated. In passing several school houses during my sojourn in this city, I have noticed many of the young in attendance, and that one of the chief requirements in teaching is that of religious exercise, so that the pupils can perform with grace and ease the simple evolutions characteristic of the expression of Catholic faith.

Adios,

Señor,

AGRICOLA.

CINCINNATUS.

LETTER XIV.

Going to Church of a Sunday Morning—Devotion of Mexican Ladies, and the Indifference of the opposite Sex thereto—Lent—Last day of Lent—Religious Processions—Spectators—Rules for Americans in Foreign Countries—Close of Lent.

AMIGO MIO:—Often have I been amused in going near and attending church of a bright Sunday morning, and also feast days, to see the sexes pass me by, on to the temple of their God, and divide off, before entering, as if by natural impulses. While the fair sex trip along with downcast eyes and solemn countenances, to the sacred shrine, to dip the curved finger in the holy water, and cross their foreheads, typic of their faith; to ask there of the holy Fathers forgiveness of the past, and offer up a simple prayer in behalf of their friends and themselves, the sterner sex have taken their position, to behold youth and beauty gracefully glide by them, as they pass out homeward, from the old church, renovated, with a light step, a joyful heart, and a countenance exempt from care.

This habit of gentlemen taking their position outside of the church, who should regard gallantry and the grace which adorn the fair sex, and walk, in like cases, in company with ladies to show them a due respect and courtesy, I cannot but condemn as mischievous and impertinent.

The last three days of Lent are faithfully observed, busi-

ness of most all kinds being suspended by law during these days, and devotions and processions assume its stead, in a solemn and imposing form. Yet I am not aware that these ceremonials could, to any extent, sway me while my mind is open to reason and the free exercise of common sense. During this period the stores and government houses are closed; and for a week previous new dresses for ladies are purchased and made up, to wear in celebration upon this occasion. It is considered at this time a want of respect to wear an old dress; and consequently a lady would exert herself much to be in possession of this most desirable consideration. In this respect merchants, where there is wealth in the cities, reap no small benefits. At this time the ladies and the Indians go to church, attending devotion much more than the gentlemen; and in fact, it is but seldem that I have seen any of the gentlemen in church. Though I am not aware that I can reasonably assign any cause for this want of devotion in the Mexican gentleman, yet it is possible that they think for themselves in matters of piety and reason.

The last day of Lent is celebrated at evening with a great procession, carrying candles three feet long, images, and symbols, typic of, and peculiar to Catholicism; and these are most commonly borne along the streets by mixed colors. In the seaport towns few of either sex, of the pure Castilian origin, I am told, walk in these processions. The Father of the church walks along in the procession under a canopy of silk, sustained by four attendants, attired for the occasion, and himself clad in priesthood costume, with a long and flowing gown, and a crown upon his head. In advance of this procession a band of church musicians march and play a solemn air, which is remarkably adapted to fascinate and impress the ignorant with awe and reverence, and with the mystic forms of sacerdotal power. The

house-tops, balconies, and all convenient places along the streets, are crowded with the gay, the young, the beautiful, and sensible, and with the gentlemen now in attendance upon them, to observe this religious procession, the closing scene of Lent. As it passed I raised my hat respectfully, as courtesy to this foreign people seemed to demand it, and as it would have appeared exceedingly discourteous to them for me not to have complied with so simple a requirement of their order of faith.

In foreign countries, and surrounded by foreign influences, Americans should observe to do as the better class do, on such occasions as emanate from religious worship, without the sacrifice of conscience; and they would thereby avoid difficulties and distrust, and demand that respect even by courtesy, which is much to be desired in a distant land.

The next morning at 8 o'clock, images of Judas Iscariot being suspended in various parts of the city, clad in the garb of betrayal, and filled with a bountiful and unmistakable supply of powder, they were, at a given signal of the church bell exploded, all at the same time, which produced a shout of rejoicing throughout the city, the consummation of Lent; and then the daily avocations of all classes were resumed with good cheer and a free conscience, and seemingly with redoubled activity.

Adios,

Señor,

AGRICOLA,

CINCINNATUS.

LETTER XV.

Feelings of Mexican Gentlemen towards Americans—Their desire to know better the Laws and concernments of the United States of America—Their Impression of the Public Schools in the United States, and of the Improvements and Advancements generally—Their Complexion, Manners, Customs, and Morality—Mexican Gamblers—The American Gambler fined—His Hardihood.

AMIGO MIO :—It is the impression in the United States since the war with Mexico, that Mexicans entertain no good feeling towards Americans, but a spirit of implacable hatred and enmity ; however, Mexican gentlemen and officers both civil and military, so far as I am able to discover and judge, rather dispel this impression by their open, frank, and generous treatment towards Americans of good and reputable character, coming among them. Notwithstanding, in some parts, I have observed an impression somewhat departing from this ;—but generally it is engendered by the irregularities of Americans traveling and residing in the country. Such Mexican gentlemen as I have just mentioned, endeavor to acquaint themselves with the affairs and politics of enlightened nations, their laws and customs, their usages and judicial decisions upon important questions ; and they even become quite inquisitive for information, touching the policy of the United States Government, the nature and bearings of its constitution ; and also, the numerous characteristics of the constitutions of States, and of the institutions which prevail in the great confederacy of States.

They think that our great social and common school system of education throughout the Union, the palladium of liberty, the safeguard of man's dearest heritages, life, liberty, and conscience, is the wonder and admiration of the enlightened, and the the terror of the ignorant, and as near complete as human nature can conceive. They are not slow in applauding us for our numerous institutions of learning both civil and military, and concede to us the pre-eminence of our statesmen and orators, and the ability and penetration of our capatalists and merchants. They even enlarge upon our internal improvements, and speak of the application of steam-power to navigation, rail-roads, and the purposes of manufacturing, and of the invention of the telegraph, with rapture and zeal, wishing that, at no distant day, their own country might rise to similar importance. In their manners, this class of gentlemen are bland and affable, and would command the highest consideration of Americans, did they but feel to know each other better. This class have fair complexions, and are quite active in business pursuits. In their habits they are temperate both as to eating and drinking. During a month's stay in the city of Mazatlan, I do not remember of having seen a drunken Mexican of the least pretension to associate in good society; and this I attribute to the great use made of wine among them. Strong drinks are seldom used, for the climate being mild, does not seem to require the use of them. Wines are set on the table both at breakfast and dinner; though claret is most freely used, at all times.

With regard to the morality of Mexican gentlemen, I can really see no difference between them and the same class of Americans, only the latter are not so open, but conceal much more of what they think or do than the former. These gentlemen are of medium size, intelligent, easy and affable in their external deportment, and generally make

a pleasing and lasting impression, Gambling among them, may be practiced to some extent; but it is done in the way of amusement and recreation,—not for the petty object of gain. I am told that there are professional gamblers here, who are well known, marked out, and shunned by the better and best class in society, in the same manner as in other polished and enlightened countries. Those who came on the Arizona at the time of my coming, were known and marked out, ere they had been in the city an hour; and before a week had elapsed, one of them had his money, to the amount of one hundred dollars, seized by the policeman, when on the table; for even here it is against the law to gamble; however it is persisted and adventured in secretly, as if within the prison walls of some strong fortress.

The whole amount belonging to this gambler was liable to forfeiture, and himself to a heavy fine; however, he was fined ten dollars only, without forfeiture, through respect to Americans. It would have been truly amusing to me to have seen him sentenced and put in the chain gang, cleaning the streets and laboring for the public good, because of his hardihood and impudence in a foreign country; taking the responsibility of breaking the laws made for the suppression of vice and crime, and the security of domestic firesides.

Adios,

Señor,

AGRICOLA.

CINCINNATUS.

LETTER XVI.

Hours of Business in Mazatlan—Ladies, their Complexion, Manners, Education, Character—Their Marriages to Foreigners—Their Morality and the Sympathy received in certain cases—Characters of the Mixed Castes generally—Their Wages—Effect of Politicians upon them—Their Predisposition for a Town Life—Peculiar Content of all Classes.

AMIGO MIO:—With reference to the hours of business, seldom much is done before eight or nine o'clock in the morning, and it is pursued quietly, till five o'clock in the afternoon; though generally with advantage and success. I have seen many ladies of a fine *blond* color, descendants of the old Castilians. Many of them, to my surprise, have blue eyes, auburn hair, aud rosy cheeks. Their forms are delicate, possessing small hands and wrists, tapering arms, small feet and ankles, rosy lips, small mouth, white teeth well arranged, usually in due proportion, black and blue eyes, black, auburn, and red hair, straight and acquiline noses, and finally, rather short of stature. Their movements and walk are usually attended with ease and grace, though they may not be able to read or write. The instruction of the female sex is, I am told, most shamefully neglected; for the largest portion of them is far from having received the first rudiments of a Spanish education. Notwithstanding, they are affable, some of them naturally

intelligent, and most of them command respect and courtesy from strangers, because of their natural goodness of heart, and being ever ready to perform good offices to their fellow-beings. They seem to be more plausible and kinder to strangers than the gentlemen usually are;—and this may be accounted for, from the fact that many have married foreigners, who are found to be more attentive to their wants, and better providers than the Mexican gentlemen themselves.

Several Mexican ladies in Mazatlan are married to foreigners, and are rearing healthful and happy families. They appear to live happily and quietly, having a kind and sympathetic respect for each other. So far as I am able to judge, the female character among the better class of Mexican ladies, assumes the same high tone for purity and morality, that it does among our own fair sex, in the United States. I am ever happy to advocate the morality of the female character, in whatsoever region I may see the representatives of it,—though I should not, had I no just reason to predicate my position upon; for every one should have justice awarded in proportion to merit and durable worth. It is not my impression that when a Mexican lady departs from the path of virtue and rectitude, her own sex heap upon her that scorn, abuse, forgetfulness, and utter contempt, that is so common among our own country ladies! They seem to weigh the *scale* of humanity, and pause, and think, ere they too hastily act wholly to the ruin of others! They sympathise with her upon her fallen condition, buoying up her wounded pride, and affording her many kind offices and a chance for repentance and recognition into the sacred bands of society. This practice appears, most assuredly, more Christian-like; though it should emanate from a horde of barbarians. The lower class of the community being Indians, and some of a mixed breed

and formerly Indian *Peones*, without any advantages but what nature has given them; nothing can be expected of them on the score of morality, and it would now really be a wonder to me, if they are much in advance of the Aztecs or other Indian tribes of this country, at the time of the conquest. This *caste* now perform the labors, both in the house and in the field; however, they are free, laboring for whom they please. The males get eight dollars a month, out of which they board and lodge themselves; the females perform the labors within, most commonly such as washing and other menial services, for the wealthier classes of the community. These Indians seem to be happy and content, till aroused to assume a more prominent standing by promises of wealth and preferment from those plebeian or patrician politicians, who infest this distracted country like vultures, if they will espouse their cause—their work of reformation—and bear arms under their sacred banners, until that reformation is complete, and they are installed into the richest and most potent offices of State. Then these promises, in part, still continue to be promises; and the Indians would have been much better off had they remained at home, living upon a most scanty allowance of beef, and corn-cakes, with some Chili pepper, and having only a blanket to shield them from the northern blast! They prefer a town life to that of the bracing air of the country, though they might raise an abundance there, and live in princely luxury, were they industrious like those who settled on Pilgrim Rock. I have often smiled to pass the houses of this class in Mexico, and looking in, to see their neatness and contented dispositions, so well adapted to this low *state*, when comparing them and their condition, in mind, with other more favored countries. All classes in the body politic, seem to a stranger, passive and capable

of enduring great privations; and when in affluence, they do not appear to be puffed up by the follies of fortune—arrogance and vanity.

Adios,

Señor,

AGRICOLA.

CINCINNATUS.

LETTER XVII.

Barron and Forbes—Their Banishment from Tepic—Their reputed Policy and Adherence to the Santa Anna Party—Their Manners and Characters.

AMIGO MIO:—Among the gentlemen acquaintances I have made at Mazatlan, there are two prominent characters—Barron and Forbes—the former the English consul, and the latter the American Consul at Tepic, sixty miles inland from San Blas. These gentlemen figure largely in the political and financial atmosphere of Mexico; and of course, they are consequently sometimes in the minority, when they must expect a reaction in their disfavor, in a country so often distracted by intestine commotion, which enkindles and makes more acute their financial acumen. If I mistake not in the date of the month, these Consuls were, last December, 1855, banished from Tepic by the Castaños or Comonfort party. This party are at swords' point with that of Santa Anna, and consequently, retaliate in the same manner that they have been imposed upon in times past. The *house* of Barron and Forbes takes the lead in the support of Santa Anna's party at Tepic; and it has been frequently said, though with how much truth I cannot state, that, in a commercial and financial view, they bear a predominent sway to the injury of other minor establishments.

Being obnoxious to the Comonfort or Castaños party,

and having attempted to ship a large amount of silver out of the country, without paying the customary duty, as reported by this party,—it was deemed prudent and necessary to rid Tepic of these two officials. It is further said that there were seven Consulates at Tepic lodged in the *house* of Barron and Forbes, and that they made each Consulate operate to the disadvantage of the other party's interest. This is one side of the case, which caused the banishment of these two officials; and the other is, that the present ruling party at Tepic desired to persecute them through envy, and because of their adherance to Santa Anna's party, and on account of their immense wealth and influence. Notwithstanding these reports, I am much pleased to have formed the acquaintance of these gentlemen, who, I have been informed, were born in this Republic, and are of Scottish extraction.

They are courteous and bland in their manners, intelligent and affable; and I have found them ever ready to be the medium of communicating information upon subjects touching the political and physical condition of the country. For my part, I could see nothing about them, which is not in the strictest rules of propriety, and of good will to others. It is perfectly natural for a man of wealth and influence to have enemies in every clime, and for him to espouse the side of politics, by the means of which he can advance his own interest, in the most rapid manner; and as a matter of course, he must meet with political opponents, and those engaged in similar pursuits. And thus, men use men when in their power, and thus nations, too often, wage wars for sordid ends.

Adios,

Señor,

AGRICOLA.

CINCINNATUS.

LETTER XVIII.

Influence of the U. S. Squadron upon Mazatlan, and the Mexican Pacific Coast, after taking possession of this portion, and coasting along—The just Policy pursued by the United States at Mazatlan during this period—Its Effect—Dread of the Americans leaving—Their Departure—Americans Incurring Misusage.

AMIGO MIO :—During the Mexican war, while the Americans held possession of Mazatlan, from the eleventh of November 1847, till the close of hostilities,—peace, plenty and a good administration of the laws reigned here under the influence of the United States' squadron, which consisted of the frigates Independence, Congress and Cyane, and the transport Iris,—under the command of Commodore Shrubrick, afterwards relieved by Commodore Jones, who arrived in the Ohio of seventy four guns. Mazatlan at this time, was under the command of Col. Tellez, a Mexican officer; but not having a sufficient force to retain his position, he evacuated the city and left it to protect itself the best it could, on being summoned to surrender at eight o'clock the eleventh of November by Commodore Shrubrick. Terms of capitulation and surrender were agreed upon at one o'clock P. M., of the same day, when five hundred marines with one hundred soldiers and four pieces of artillery, composed the division that took possession and occupied Mazatlan, without the semblance of opposition; and the next day all the hills and eminences

commanding the road to the interior, they seized and strengthened with heavy ordinance.

Afterwards some slight skirmishes occurred between the Americans and Mexicans not far from the city, but of no great advantage or consequence to either party. The frigate Congress and sloop of war Portsmouth, under the command of Capt. Lavallette, had taken Guaymas on the twentieth of October, after a severe fire, continuing nearly an hour, doing considerable damage to the town, and killing and wounding a number of Mexicans. The American squadron under Commodore Shrubrick, and afterwards, Commodore Jones, blockaded and occupied all the Mexican towns of any importance in the Gulf of California, and on the Pacific coast, from October 1847 till the termination of the Mexican war. A military Governor, custom house officers, and other subordinate officials were appointed at Mazatlan by the Commodore, and every precaution required with reference to the distribution of justice and a due execution of the laws made for the public good, which wisdom and discretion under the peculiar circumstances of holding a conquered city, could reasonably suggest, was resorted to, and duly exercised on this occasion. In front of the town there was always a portion of the squadron to act in concert with the force on land, and this had the desired effect to preserve good order in the city. I have been told by good authority, that the period of the Americans holding possession of the city was that of almost absolute peace, which inspired the community with energy and renewed activity. Foreign duties were greatly diminished, and those inland were expunged from the code of the municipal laws. Fair prices were paid for all the provisions and necessaries required by the Americans, while here in sovereignty,—and strict justice to native

Mexicans, as well as to American marines and soldiers, was equally administered, without favor or solicitation.

When peace was declared in the year 1848, and the Americans were about to leave the town and let the former laws and regulations with all their iron rigor, assume their wonted sway; there was in this foreign community a spirit of regret, which arose in rebuke of their exit. As the marines and soldiers, with their respective officers, were leaving the fort and marching to the water's edge for embarkation, and the military about to be exchanged for the civil authority; the porticos, the house-tops, and every place presenting to the eye a sight, were occupied by the old and the young, the fair and the homely, the beautiful and the ugly, the maimed and the blind, the wise and the ignorant, to catch a farewell glance *at* the conservators of peace as they marched near them, playing that commemorative air—"Sweet Home!"

Then the white *handkerchief* was gracefully waved in token of regret, and a silent *tear* graced the flushed cheek, in consummation of this departing scene. During my stay in this city, I have been treated with as much attention and courtesy as a foreigner could expect, and as much as one should desire. It is my impression that Americans too frequently incur misusage in this strange country, by their own bad conduct, and the usual contempt they entertain for *the* Mexican institutions and regulations of Government.

Adios,

Señor,

AGRICOLA.

CINCINNATUS.

LETTER XIX.

Customs of Ladies and Gentlemen—Their Dress—Vigilance over Young Ladies—Their Marriage—Their Walking in the Streets—Their Manner of Shopping—Amusement at Night—Masquerade Ball and the Police about the Doors—Amusements for Gentlemen.

AMIGO MIO:—The manners and customs of ladies and gentlemen are quite different in Mexico from those of Americans in the United States. They rise and retire late, have coffee or chocolate early in the morning, breakfast usually at ten A. M., dine at five in the afternoon, and close their day's repasts by taking tea, coffee or chocolate at eight o'clock in the evening. They are rather sedate at meals, than loquacius like the French. They are polite, courteous and affable, when properly introduced to; though frequently, I have met them accidentally, without the formalities of introduction, and found in them a warm response, quite different from the *calculating Englishman* or *Scotchman*. Gentlemen dress mostly after the American or French style; and within the tropics commonly wear whitish or brownish hats, which do not so much attract the sun's scorching rays. Ladies dress somewhat after the American and French style; though they do not generally lace so much as the former, neither do they wear, when they go out into the streets, bonnets; but in their stead, they gracefully throw over their head and shoulders *los rebozos*, which rather look uniquely, as they trip along the streets, especially to foreigners not having seen this peculiar Spanish costume.

It is not customary for ladies to ride out in company with gentlemen as elsewhere, nor do they go out at all with strangers, that is, persons not members of the family, without the protection of some one of their own near relatives, or a watchful old matron. In addressing a lady with intention of matrimony, it is necessary for the gentleman to do this homage in the presence of the mother, or some shrewd and eagle-eyed member of the family, who usually remains in the parlor or sitting room, pretending to be busily engaged about nothing, but watches most unobservingly, during the gentleman's *suspicious* attendance. When this watchful courtship ends, having been as closely besieged and guarded as some old castle fortress, the bands of matrimony are published in the church, making known the victory, and that objections may be raised. When the wedding day is set, the Padre attired in *ecclesiastical power* and purity of conscience, comes and officiates at this festal scene, with large expectations, if the parties are rich, not in the spirit of catholic faith, but in the *embezzlement* of wealth. It is not customary for ladies to walk out much in the streets, nor go out expressly to purchase goods.

In case of their wanting goods, dresses and the like, they send their servants to the stores, who request the clerks to repair to their houses, or send samples of what they want till they are suited, and then they pay for the articles purchased. This practice, by American ladies, who are ever too fond of shopping and walking in the streets, might be considered rather idle, frivolous, and prudish, yet it is quite the usage among the better class of ladies in the Republic, and undoubtedly derived its origin from oriental customs. Most of the exercise the Mexican ladies take is confined to within their court-yards, which are, not uncommonly, quite beautiful, and on the plaza at night, when the sky is clear and starry, and the air cool and bracing. As in the

United States and most of European countries, it is here deemed vulgar, and generally, servant-like, to be seen walking in the streets; therefore, in this respect, ladies seem to foreigners to have exercised over themselves a fastidious guardianship. The houses, for the most, are kept close during the day, and ventilated early in the evening or at night. At this time of the day in tropical countries, there is much social amusement.

Balls and evening parties and dinners, are quite common in Mazatlan, and I have been much rejoiced to see the gayety and life manifested on such occasions. Shortly after my arrival in this city, I attended a masquerade ball at the French Hotel, where I have remained since my disembarkation. This ball was composed of near fifty couple and a goodly number of spectators, among whom I was; they had passable music, a rich repast at twelve o'clock, and then resumed the dance till broad day-light. Several policemen were stationed about the house to preserve good order,—and the head of the city police was in attendance at the ball, clad in his insignia of office, a military coat and hat with a sword suspended by his side. This gentleman outwardly appeared easy, courteous and affable, and commingled with the party as if he was not distinguished by any official capacity.

Fishing, hunting, and other amusements are frequently resorted to, as pastime and relaxation from business among gentlemen of leisure. Horse-racing and bull-fighting are not forgotten as existing among their old usages; nor is cock-fighting by the *most humble saints*. Dice and chess are common games in the higher circle; so are billiards and nine-pins.

Adios,

Señor,

AGRICOLA.

CINCINNATUS.

LETTER XX.

Mazatlan, a point for Whalers—Light Tonnage Dues—Whaling Ground about the Cape and on the coast—Fresh Provisions easily obtained at Mazatlan—Captain of a Whaler in the Port, and the ease of Obtaining men for a Cruise—Peculiarity of Mexicans in this respect.

AMIGO MIO:—As yet, I have omitted to mention the city of Mazatlan as a practicable point for many of the American whalers to get recruits of fresh provisions, and men also, who might be well adapted to this arudous, daring, and laborious pursuit. This mixed caste of Indians, negros and whites, are very patient, nearly as much so as the negro himself, and many of them near the sea-ports are enured from long habits to the water, the use of boats, and also diving, which last feat they can perform with as much ease, grace and suppleness of motion, as the natives of the Hawaiian Islands.

Of late, and that too with a careful foresight, the Mexican law with reference to port and tonnage dues, has been repealed under the auspices of Comonfort; and since which, any foreign vessels, coming into any of the Mexican ports on the Pacific, are placed on a similar footing with those bearing the national flag, except they are debarred the privilege of the coast trade, that is, carrying the natural or received productions or commodities from one Mexican port to another. This policy is really inviting to foreign vessels, especially those whalers which may be out near

Cape St. Lucas or in that region at sea, on their whaling ground. Off the coast of Lower California and the upper Pacific coast of Mexico, whalers have, for a few years past, done as well as in many other regions of the west Pacific; and their success is constantly on the increase, which being the case; and whalers for more than a year have fallen off from getting their recruits in Honolulu, owing to the high price of provisions and other necessaries, and also the heavy discounts on whalers' bills. In the district of Mazatlan, fresh provisions being readily raised and brought into the city, to supply any demand; men not accustomed to high wages, but servile in their general characteristics, being quickly engaged; and above all, there being good and substantial commercial houses, upon which bills of exchange could be readily drawn for New York or Boston: all these enumerated considerations presented in favor of Mazatlan, with due deference to the opinions of gentlemen better schooled in this pursuit than myself, I submit for perusal, and what you, amigo, may think them worth. Though I cannot dismiss this subject without hoping they may meet with a most careful examination by those interested most directly, that the best interest of Mexico and the United States may thereby be greatly promoted and enlarged.

During my sojourn in the city, a whaler put into the outer harbor and sent a long boat with the second mate to discover the nature of the port laws;—and finding the port charges comparatively nothing, he put into the inner harbor, anchored, was boarded by the custom-house officers merely through form, got some fresh supplies, and readily shipped four Mexicans on a whaling cruise, with as much ease and as little delay, as in New Bedford harbor. The Captain informed me that he had had such men in his employ, and that they readily rendered him most important service on the whaling ground.

This caste being so addicted to the game of chance in their social amusements, and for the purpose of gain also, it would seem to lead to an easy conviction in the minds of any one acquainted with their peculiar characteristics, that there never would be any difficulty in procuring any number of such men, at most any time; more especially, as their living on board is necessarily found them, which, with this caste, is a consideration of paramount importance.

Adios,

Señor,

AGRICOLA.

CINCINNATUS.

LETTER XXI.

Departure from Mazatlan for San Blas—Native Schooner—Passengers—Distance—The Coast along—Port of San Blas—Its Site—Productions on el Rio de Santiago—Harbor of San Blas, a Roadstead—Danger of it in the Rainy Season—Elevation of a portion of San Blas—Its supply of Water—Its Houses—Old Spanish Custom House—Business, and that Class residing here—Unhealthiness of the Site—Public Houses—Native Hotel—French Hotel—Hotel Fare.

AMIGO MIO:—Having been in Mazatlan and its vicinity near a month, I began to feel desirous of seeing other parts of the Mexican Republic, and to-day, the twenty-third of March, I left for San Blas, on a small Italian schooner, in company with several Mexican ladies and gentlemen, and also one American, Captain Stocker. That port is distant from this city one hundred and eighty miles.

It was five o'clock on Sunday afternoon, and the schooner was crowded with native passengers, not unlike the Hawaiian schooners sailing from Island to Island; the cabin was small and appropriated to family uses; and most of the other passengers of the better class of Mexicans, ten in number, remained on deck, eating, drinking, sauntering and sleeping there also. The passage money we had to pay was fifteen dollars;—though we were found with a bountiful supply of bread, beef, fowls, eggs, cheese, coffee, tea, and Chili peppers. Thus, we had to pass two long days in most tedious expectation, standing or reclining upon the deck of a small coaster in the hot tropical sun, sometimes having

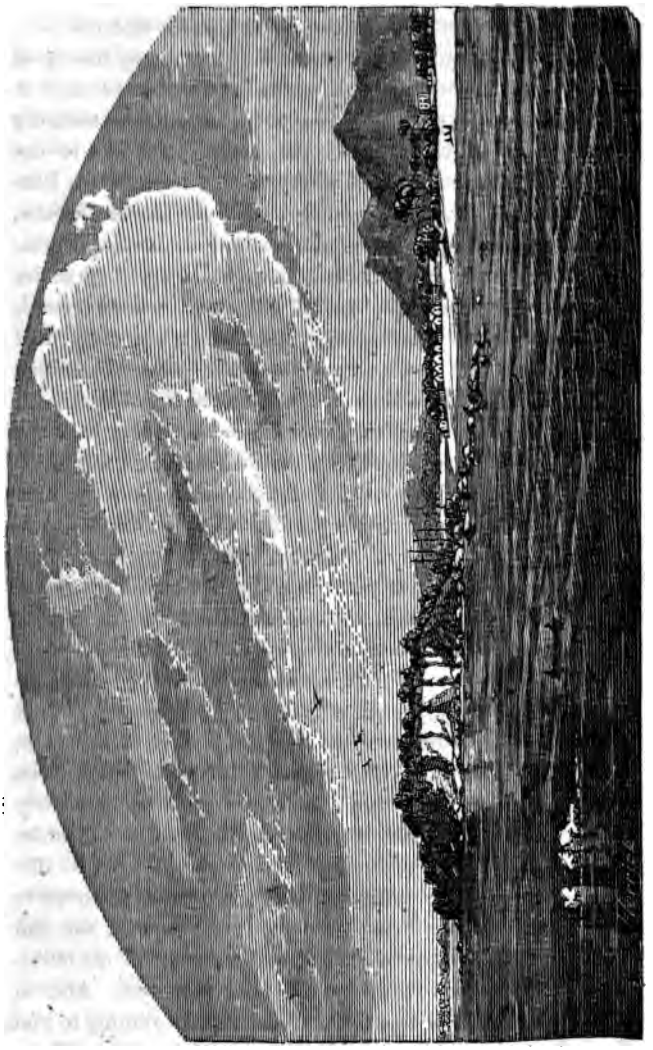
the benefit of the shadow of the sail intervening between us and that scorching luminary. Nevertheless, in sailing so near the coast, and apparently, measuring the space along, it was not wholly without interest to my making close observations. The coast seems rather shelving to the shore with eminences, hills, and mountains in the background, and also, with some inlets and coves where native vessels might safely ride in a storm. The coast between Mazatlan and San Blas is far from presenting such mountainous peaks as the coast above the former port.

In the afternoon of the twenty-fifth of March, our arrival was announced in the port of San Blas, which, to a stranger and a foreigner too, had anything else than a pleasing appearance. The population of this place is computed to not much exceed two thousand, and most of whom are Indians or mixed. The port of San Blas is situated not far from the mouth of el Rio de Santiago, which crosses the rich and productive province of Guadalajara from east to west, and is of considerable size for a long distance up its source; though in the vicinity of the city of Guadalajara, it is rather small, passing through cañadas in resemblance to those through which the American river, and most of the California rivers pass, on one's approximating the mountain districts. In the neighborhood of San Blas and up this river, there is an extensive bottom land country of almost surpassing fertility. Corn, beans, rice, sugar, coffee, cocoa, cotton, bananas, plantains, the different species of custard-apple, oranges, limes, and wild fruits of a relishable flavor, are to a considerable extent grown, which find in Mazatlan, San Blas, and Tepic, a consuming market. The harbor of San Blas is little more than an open road-stead; however, merchant vessels run into a small frith behind a projecting point, which appears to afford them almost ample security; except during the rainy season, when the winds prevail

from the south-east to the south, and from the south-west. During this season there is no safety in lying here at anchor; for storms and winds fall upon doomed places within the tropics, as if by the potent force of gravitation. A portion of its site near the beach, and where the business seems to be done, is low, sandy, and scarcely elevated above the sea; yet the old part of the town is built on a slight elevation, not exceeding four hundred and fifty feet, which, in the rainy season, resembles an Island; as it is surrounded by branches of el Rio de Santiago. Its watering place for shipping is eastward of the roads about three hundred yards, and it is necessary to roll the casks this distance through jungles to the river, in order to obtain supplies of fresh water. Winds favorable to most of the Mexican ports on the Pacific generally blow from the west and north-west.

The streets are few, narrow, and dirty; and one, in the jungles would not think them laid out with very precise notions of regularity. The better class of houses and public buildings have not much to boast over the architecture of Indian huts, made of bamboo, a species of coarse reed, which reeds are cut off near twelve feet long, and then set in the ground perpendicularly, in the form of a row, the size of the hut, leaving places for doors and windows. They are usually covered with a coarse grass laid on reeds, running across the tops of the perpendicular ones, at an angle of forty-five degrees.

Thus lo! the poor Indian, the red man of the forest, huts himself in this land of perennial spring, by a most simple effort of plastic skill. In this port there are a few adobe houses and stone buildings, though there is one which should not pass without notice. It is the old Spanish Custom House, situated on the right of the street from the landing, which is one-half mile from the new town. This building is of the Moorish order of architecture, of a very early



CITY AND HARBOR OF SAN BLAS.

date in the history of Mexican events, under Spanish recognition. It is on a mound near 500 feet above the level of the sea. It looks old and somewhat dilapidated; and in approaching the port, it is the only building of seeming consequence which, in bold relief, singles itself out to the eye of a stranger. This is where the old town of San Blas was located. The road leading to this old Custom House, winds around a portion of the mound in a spiral form, which adds much to the natural beauty and grandeur of the site. It is mechanically paved with small pebble stones, which work was done by the Spaniards when they held possession of the country, and made the numerous Indian tribes on the western slope of the Mexican Cordillera contribute from the silver and gold mines abounding in those regions to fill their proud coffers here for foreign shipment. Along the base of this mound, and the road, there are seen growing many of the fruits peculiar to this latitude, comprising a dense forest of plantain, banana, cocoa, the custard-apple and other tropical trees, with a thick jungle of flowering shrubs, vines, and plants, which render ineffectual the penetration of one's vision; yet, in a hot climate, treat the admirers of nature with lovely and verdant aspects. As seen in the cut of San Blas, this mound of bold and rocky formation, presents itself, as I have observed, at sea and near the port, with a most picturesque uniqueness. The surface of its summit embraces an area of nearly eighty rods square, which forms the site of the old town, as just remarked in a preceding paragraph. Owing to this unhealthy site, the business of the port was removed to nearer the landing many years since; however, the Old Custom House is now occupied, and many of the old buildings suffered to go to decay, are now tenanted. And in fact, the ruins of a departed age are now beginning to bud from the ruthless inertness of a mercurial, an improvident, yet a desirous people.

This Custom House is a large, elegant and capacious construction of stone, with colonnades all around inside of the court-yard, and stuccoed with a snowy white cement. On the verge of this mound, there is a redoubt which looks down a perpendicular descent, the full height of the fort, and planted here, in an eminent position to command the harbor, there are several cannon of large calibre, which look as if they might do execution if properly engineered.

In San Blas, there is one main street on which most of the business is done, and where most of the houses and huts are situated. There are a few foreigners in this port engaged in commercial pursuits, who own small schooners which serve as coast-carriers, plying from one sea port town to another. These foreigners are distinguished by the appellations of French, Germans, Hollands, and one American, having come to this place from California. It would not require a superhuman effort to convince one that it is solely avarice, a bane that too often plants man beneath the sod, which prompts human nature to endure this town. The excessive heat from its latitude and altitude, and the peculiar locality of the site, being mostly surrounded by low, marshy ponds, resulting from the disgorgement of el Rio de Santiago, tend to lead one to this consideration. These ponds abound in frogs, snakes, and other creeping reptiles incident to the torrid zone; such as sandflies, gnats, and musketos, and others too numerous by far to mention. Cientopies are common, and are looked upon by the natives with peculiar and crawling dread; they seem to possess natural instinct sufficient to get under the skin, lay eggs and breed there, causing that part to be dreadfully swollen and inflamed with a most dangerous virulence. All these considerations and circumstances, conspire beyond doubt, to place San Blas nearly in the same category as to sickness and discomfort, with Vera Cruz on the Gulf of Mexico.

In and around San Blas, there is a thick undergrowth or jungle, which one would imagine a most capital place for *ladrones*, and other species of wild and ferocious animals. In port, there are but two public houses where travelers put up, bordering on any degree of comfort. One of these is kept by a Frenchman, and the other by a creole Mexican female, of rather a durable color; but just the kind for such a position in such a climate,—to endure the blasts of innumerable ills. In putting up at *una posada* in Mexico, I always give my preference to one kept by a native; for such an host or hostess as the case may be, makes more exertion to please and court the good humor of travelers, and usually is in possession of more practical information than is common for foreigners of this class. At a native hotel, the fare at table consists of a greater variety of eatables, better cooked and placed before one, with a more cordial good will, which civility, at home or abroad, applies to the critical consideration of guests, either in favor or disfavor of the host, far beyond common expectation. The French hotel in this place is a most meagre affair; apparently it would seem like being at the mercy of the wave, to bivouac, as it were, at *la Fonda de Huesos Duros!* Fare at these hotels is 75 cents a meal, or two dollars per day, including lodging.

In my next, amigo, I will close my description of San Blas and its unhappy inmates, and lead your mind to take a view of our departure from this naked site, accompanying me to our first station.

Adios,

Señor,

AGRICOLA.

CINCINNATUS.

LETTER XXII.

Native Hotel—Musketos—Merchandise Landed in Port—San Blas, a Port of Entry and Shipment only—Whites living here—Stages for Tepic—Stage Passengers—Heard of an attack of Ladrones—Precaution—Preparation—Trunks Secured—Departure at eleven o'clock at night—Thick Woods—Expected attack.

AMIGO MIO:—I am not aware that, at the native *fonda* I have seen but two apartments, where travelers sleep,—one of which is appropriated to the benefit of ladies, and the other to that of gentlemen. The beds consist of cots to all appearance, made of moss or wool, with two sheets, a counterpane and a clean looking pillow. A musketo bar is a necessary accompaniment to the pleasure of a sleeping apartment in the hotel; as musketos at times cloud the air, and would rather make one think of the approach of an eclipse of the sun, even at meridian day.

The landing of goods and embarking on ship-board is performed here in the same manner as at Mazatlan, by the means of lighters and cargadors. Approaching the shore the water becomes shoal, and the beach is sandy, and the harbor is constantly filling in by the annual floods which pour down from the table lands of the Western Cordilleras. This place is merely designed and devised as a port of entry, and depot for the merchandise going to the interior, and the commodities brought in from the surrounding country, in favor of home or foreign shipment.

Few native whites live here, except those connected with the administration of the government; such as collectors of foreign and inland duties, an alcalde, and such as are engaged in the discharge of municipal functions in a Mexican seaport town. There are two daily lines of stages here, which leave for Tepic at eleven o'clock at night, distant 60 miles. One of these lines belong to the *old line* running through the city of Mexico, and so on to Vera Cruz on the Gulf of Mexico; and the fare from San Blas to the city of Mexico is eighty-five dollars; thence to Vera Cruz fifty dollars, making in all not much more than one hundred and thirty dollars. The other line runs to Tepic only, and charges five dollars, which the *old line* charges thus far, and thence to Vera Cruz, it runs without opposition.

Most of the passengers who came from Mazatlan to San Blas, had seven hours only to remain here before departure. There were near twenty of us desiring to go to Tepic with the *old line* of stages, including the Mexican ladies and gentlemen alluded to, with several servants. I am sorry to say that there was not room in the one stage to take us all; and therefore, the Mexican family deferred going till the next night. We were informed that we might be attacked by a band of robbers or *ladrones*, who before night perhaps, had been taking an accurate and ample survey of our baggage, our persons, and above all, our guns, revolvers and general supply of ammunition. That this being the case, I am rather under the impression they formed a correct idea of our being ready and determined to meet the emergency in the best possible manner, from the advanced condition of our preparations, at the hotel before dark. We were more particular on this occasion than usual for travelers in this port, as the stage only a few days previous to this, had been attacked by a band of *ladrones*

near Tepic, and fired through fifteen times; though no one was killed, yet one of the party was slightly wounded.

Having dined upon the ample and sumptuous good cheer of our hostess, and all other preparations having been made for our journey and safety, which precaution could reasonably suggest,—we reclined till eleven o'clock P. M., the time set for our exit and adventure. Our trunks were put on the boot behind the box as snugly as possible, and then what seemed very uncommon to me, and as if for security, iron bands would be necessary, the stage servants secured these trunks by the means of a heavy chain well fastened to bolts and rings; and thence to a ring, the chain is locked securely. This chain is used instead of a leather strap as in the United States, because the *ladrones* have usually been in the habit of riding up behind the stage and cutting the strap when the stage is in full motion; and letting the trunks fall out, an easy prey to their maurauding avarice. Some twelve of us well armed, having taken our seats within the stage at the hour of departure, and the steeds being all ready with an hostler at the head of each outside one, there being six in number, two at the tongue and four on the lead, we bade adieu to our traveling friends and most cordial and plump looking hostess, and sallied forth with a bound and galloping gait, for some miles out of the town.

The night was dark, scarcely starlight; and what added so much to the horror of travelling on this strange road, and in this strange country, particularly at night, arose from the road passing through a thick wooded country for more than twenty miles out; and most of this distance is quite low, marshy and full of ponds, with a close jungle on either side.

Such is the time for one to recall to mind the many dangers incurred by traveling in Mexican States, expecting at

any turn of the road, an unwelcome salute behind a cluster of trees or underbrush, from a band of outlaws, who in many places give no terms of peace to the country, and who infest the highways like vultures on *las pampas*, where the woolly flocks are quietly pasturing.

My next letter, amigo mio, will be merely a continuation of my stage traveling, giving you the most striking particulars which may have elicited my notice on the way to Tepic.

Adios,

Señor,

AGRICOLA.

CINCINNATUS.

LETTER XXIII.

First Station, its aspect and Soil—The Improvements thereat—Dispatch of Mexican Hostlers—Star-light—Capt. Stocker—Ready for an attack by Ladrones—Forests—Wild Birds—Landscape—Second Station—Aspect of the Country—Road—Troy Coach—Third Station—Bracing air—Country more Cultivated—Its Productions—Country aspect continued.

AMIGO MIO:—Having all arrived at our first station, we felt a sensible relief in yielding our seats for a few moments, that we might stretch ourselves, and regain man's erect estate, by walking on the earth, even in a foreign land and taking in a few breaths of its soft balmy atmosphere, without being in a flight.

We had passed along quietly for miles, for it really seemed miles, ere we came to the first post to get our relay of mules to proceed on.

The aspect and general contour of the lawn into which we entered, from the thick forest behind us, seemed rather inviting to travelers at the hour of midnight. It is surrounded on either side by a thick forest of trees and undergrowth, and apparently in the center of which lawn the rancho buildings are located, commanding no particular observations. They are of but little consequence. From the growth of the forest, the champaign country over which we had been passing, and by which this place is encompassed on either side, and the apparent abundance of needful supplies at this station, I should think this region highly pro-

ductive by nature, and that it only wants the hand of a stronger muscle, and a firmer will, and a good government, to even astonish the natives themselves.

Our coachman informed us that this station is fifteen miles from San Blas, and we all felt for the present much happier than a short time past, since silvery starlight had appeared to light our way. There is no house here of any importance, ranchos being worked by Indians, under the direction of a superintendent; the proprietors of the soil living a town life. Therefore, the sole object here as elsewhere, one would be most readily impressed with the conviction, is that of harvest and re-harvest, till the fertility of the soil is exhausted apparently, and without a thought cast to higher improvements of the place or station. Now as before, the same number of mules harnessed and arranged in the same manner to the stage, I observed, and that much dispatch was used by the servants at this post in having the mules ready at the time required. In fact, the Mexican hostlers are quite as expert in the rapid discharge of their several duties as elsewhere; and it really did most convince us that we were traveling in some more favored government; for we got along with as little delay as we might expect to encounter in the United States.

All being ready, and having surveyed this lawn as minutely as starlight would permit an accustomed eye to dart under the canopy of semi-darkness, we respectively resumed our seats; Capt. Stocker being on the top of the stage, immediately behind the driver, to keep a close lookout, and all cocked for the occasion of meeting with ladrones, if they durst show their sable heads and brilliant carbines.

During the Mexican war, and since that period, this Capt. Stocker has been a venturesome explorer of this Republic, from north to south, and from east to west, traveling with considerable money about his person, or his mule,

though in such a manner as not to create the least suspicion. Once or twice he has been taken prisoner, and many other times he has run hair-breadth escapes in passing through the districts infested by bands of revolutionary characters. The Captain is a fair specimen of a go-ahead New Yorker, and quite commonly, I have been told, he leaves an impression of his indomitable perseverance, most intrepid courage, daring valor, and his general prudence in deportment, by and through the means of which he is readily distinguished. He traces, if I mistake not, his genealogy to that numerous tribe of European adventurers who settled in New York at an early day, self-styled Gothamites. In departing from our first station we cast back, not a long lingering look, but a pleasing one, that we were again in motion, passing on at a rapid pace.' We were all ready for an attack, and having one hundred rounds of balls both in and on the outside of the stage; we were all firm in the conviction that we should give the ladrones a hot, though perhaps not the most cordial reception. The road appeared to lead us through the same thick wood and jungle as heretofore, and in passing along I was told by a fellow passenger well acquainted in this country, that we were and had been passing through parts abounding with logwood, and varieties of wood well adapted for cabinet purposes.

The forest is evergreen, and many of the trees bear blossoms of various shades of color, both fragrant and inviting. It being night I could see no wild animals nor birds, though I was told that they abound in these regions; and in similar parts of Mexico, when traveling in the day time I had the satisfaction of seeing them with mine own eyes. Among the feathered tribe are several species of parrots, attired in their brilliant plumage, and making the old woodes re-echo with their songs of mirthful festivity. In such a region, with the wild animals bounding before your soft tread, ami-

go; the feathered tribe skipping, with a slight evolution of the wing from limb to limb, and from tree to tree, and now and then making a graceful curve around you, the sun then reflecting his radiant beams on their golden tints; and with a landscape on either side exceeding the rich touch of the pencil, man can feast his mind on the actual, not the imaginary, and learn, though he knows much both by reading and traveling, and though he is ensconced in silks and in costly equipages, better how to appreciate the works of nature.

The next station we reached without an accident, and even without an attack, as we had contemplated when leaving the last. Happy now we felt to get out into a more open country, and also out of the stage, to change our cramped and *stationary position*. It is a most welcome relief to stage travelers in Mexico to have frequent relays on a public road, affording them time to rest a moment with limbs erect, and thoughts around, meditating upon what they had and were seeing about them.

The country through which we were now passing is somewhat rough and undulating, with high hills, and in the distance, mountain ranges upon ranges appeared in quick succession. The road is smooth, or comparatively free from timbers and brush, when passing woody regions, and also from stones, when passing over broken or undulating districts on to Tepic. The coach being made in Troy, in the State of New York, of large dimensions, firm and strong, much more so than those used in the United States; in comparative safety we journeyed on over proud hills and eminences in lengthened age, till our arrival at the third station was announced, when to our great satisfaction, daylight we found, had been on the wing, and the sun had just lit up the morning scuds dancing before his burnished

plane. The air is now as through the night past, coöl and bracing, especially in proportion to our elevation. A blanket or a cloak, when one travels in Mexico, at any season of the year, is a most desirable accompaniament, to be used in avoiding the damps at night, or the rains by day, in the rainy season.

All being ready, and having delighted ourselves in testing the strength and penetration of our vision, we sallied forth with bounding steeds, as if to be taught again the use of the rein and trace. The country now had more the appearance of cultivation on either side, and in the distance. Wheat and barley plainly indicated that they were fit for the sickle; and beautifully in contrast with what we had passed through but a short time since, the golden heads waved in the morning breeze, coming down from the Cordilleras.

Corn, bananas, plantains, garlics, sugar-cane, coffee, cotton and cacao, yet in small quantities of each kind, were seen growing and ripening, up the gulches and on the narrow rivulets, where water could be had for irrigation. This mode of cultivation and the kinds of productions continued the same till our arrival within a few miles of the city of Tepic; the country open and broken; volcanic and porous rocks abounding, and destitute of timber except here and there clumps of trees eight and ten feet high. Near half the distance from San Blas to Tepic, there is a very little timber, or even wood for cooking purposes, which scarcety begins thirty miles inland from the port. There is something cheering in approaching the rim of the basin which surrounds the city of Tepic.

The next I shall confine to my arrival at the stage office, and at la Fonda de Oro; afterwards it will be my purpose to give a description of this hotel in the same letter, which

may make it long and tedious: though have patience, and I will be your happy conductor in many parts of this singular and strangely romantic country.

Adios,

Señor,

AGRICOLA.

CINCINNATUS.

LETTER XXIV.

Arrival at Tepic—La Fonda de Oro—My apartment—Breakfast—Description of this Hotel—Its Architecture and Ornaments—The Court Yard.

AMIGO MIO:—Our arrival at Tepic, after having apparently and fancifully passed through many dangers by land, was announced at the stage office, not far down a narrow street from the Plaza. It was then eight o'clock, and the morning was cool and invigorating, not too warm or too cold; but just such an one as the imagination may dream of. After our getting out of the stage, dusty, fatigued, sleepy and hungry, and after seeing respectively to our baggage, the nearest and most convenient steps were taken to la Fonda de Oro, the Golden hotel, kept by Dona Pedro, a fat, short of stature, thick as tall, but a good natured landlady. I am most happy to say, amigo, that my star had not failed me yet, for I was fortunate enough to get a single room, with a good clean bed, a table and wash-stand, fronting the Plaza on the north. Most of my traveling companions met with the same success, though in different apartments of the same building. Having my trunk taken to my room, and this being quickly adjusted for the occasion, with water, soap and towels, I mechanically closed the huge door, having small apertures in the upper panel for the admission of light and air, and turned a correspond-

ing key, letting my quickened imagination take a long farewell of *ladrones* and threatened dangers. Being now the twenty-sixth day of March, I found the temperature warm and somewhat suffocating in my room, as I was then about undergoing a thorough washing and scrubbing with the requirements but just alluded to. After this bath, I endeavored to rest a few moments to resuscitate my wearied frame, ere I sallied out of my prison wall. The welcome news of the breakfast bell having been announced throughout the halls, which made them re-echo the pleasant sound, I found myself attired and ready to repair to the breakfast saloon where the *cedar table* seemed to groan with the many good dishes prepared to my liking; some after our mode of cooking, and others wholly Spanish. Our breakfast consisted of coffee and chocolate, beef-steak, and chickens, roasted and cooked otherwise, sweet potatoes and onions, rice with fresh beef cooked together, hot cakes and good light bread, eggs, fish and lettuce. These dishes at table were all served in a most respective manner to the guests, for the use of whom individually there was placed near the plate a fine table napkin. I am not aware of any butter being on the table, which, as an article of luxury and good relish, is rare throughout Mexico; and when had, it is whitish and unrelishable. Breakfast at this hotel is from ten to eleven o'clock, A. M.; dinner at five, and chocolate at eight o'clock in the evening; and besides, in the morning at six, seven or eight o'clock, chocolate can be had by announcing one's desire to the chamber waiter, whose office it is to call at an early hour in the morning, to receive the requests and orders of the guests, in their respective rooms.

Having taken a minute survey of la Fonda de Oro, I discovered it to be a large building, occupying an area of two hundred by one hundred and fifty feet, and consisting of

two stories, the lower one rented out for stores, and the upper one occupied by mine hostess. The upper story is divided off into sleeping apartments; a breakfast saloon which answers for a dining one also; a kitchen and other rooms required for the convenience of the house. This building is composed of adobes and sun-burnt bricks, laid in Mexican cement, which becomes firmly united with the other materials.

In Spanish or Mexican countries one of the chief requirements in architecture, is a *will* to so construct their dwellings as to be impervious to the effect of heat or cold; which construction I readily recognized in making further observations with reference to this hotel. The walls are three feet thick; the floors eighteen inches thick, and composed of joists, planks, and bricks laid in cement; the roof is flat like all the rest in this city, and is constructed in the same manner as at Mazatlan and elsewhere throughout the whole Republic. This construction resembles that of the floor. The Public Square or Plaza, is on the north side of this hotel, which is situated lengthwise, extending two hundred feet from east to west. Fronting the Plaza, la Fonda has a balcony running its whole length, suspended by columns fifteen feet apart, with arches neatly turned and extending from one column to the other.

The same columns extend from the basis of the balcony to the roof of this castle-like mansion, with arches turned in the same manner as below. The balcony serves as a fine promenade at any time of the day, for it is ever cool, and frequently there is a bracing mountain breeze passing through it, which delights one very much, on coming out of his darkened chamber. Mechanically speaking, there is no window to this edifice, but mere apertures through the upper panels of the doors, which answer the purpose of lighting the apartments by day. The doors are large and thick,

and well hung by iron fastenings, which would ostensibly bid defiance to petty thieves and robbers. Fronting the plaza, they open on to the balcony, which I have found to be a matter of great convenience, in the promotion of comfort and pleasure. The balcony is twenty feet wide; and on the east side of the house, there is none, except small projections at doors, looking out into the street. This hotel is constructed upon the plan of a hollow square, affording a court-yard in the center thirty by thirty feet, with a balcony, columns, and arches formed in the same manner as those fronting the street on the north, except that this balcony extends around the circle of the court-yard below and above, and is near twelve feet wide. It serves as a promenade for the inside or court-yard sleeping apartments, and rooms adapted to several other purposes. The building is plastered with a cement on the inside, and also on the outside, which gives it a hard finish and whitish appearance. The street balcony has a balustrade three feet high, and of heavy construction, suitable to the columns and arches; and that within is constructed in a similar manner, extending fron column to column around the balcony. The rail of this balustrade is near eight inches wide, and also extends horizontally from column to column, as just mentioned; and on it, Dona Pedro has a fine collection of flowering plants and shrubs, which she superintends and prunes with her own careful hands.

These natural ornaments—those which not only the enlightened delight to gather and wreathe into fancied festoons, but the untutored Indian who roams the wild forest, feels himself elated and delighted when plucking those that, many times, carpet the earth and cringe at his tread—impress them with the imposing beauty and harmony in the adjustment of nature's works. They add too a cooling freshness and charm to the inside balcony, which makes the

power of it almost irresistible; notwithstanding, in the center of the court-yard, there is a playful fountain, jetting up near fifteen feet, or on a level with the balcony, and then darting off and falling in different directions, in resemblance to rain, when near the fountain.

Not far from the fountain are set four orange trees of good size, which are in perennial bloom, and pour forth to various apartments the sweet and balmy odor arising from bursting buds; and near this artistic reservoir is set a willow tree, sheding its long and slender arm-like branches over this crystal water, making it cool to the palate, waving to the gentle touch of the least breeze within, and causing one to feel that yet there may be an Elysian abode for the good man to retire to rest. I have yet to describe another natural ornament, which would rather tend to eclipse the beauty of the past scene.

Near each of the columns within the court-yard, there grows and ascends to the entablatures of the upper columns of the building, a climbing rose bush, rare in its beauty, and in perennial bloom, running along near the upper arches, entwining and wreathing each other respectively into thousands of gay festoons and unique intermixtures, from the pedestals where these creepers enter the ground, to the tips of their delicate fingers, of irresistible tangibility, around the upper circle of the court-yard.

Adios,

Señor,

AGRICOLA. CINCINNATUS.

LETTER XXV.

Call on the Commercial House of Barron & Forbes—Their Agent—Introduction to Señor Callier, superintendent of their Cotton Factory—La Plaza—Churches—City Prison—Prisoners for Political Offences—Extent of La Plaza—Its Promenades—The Reservoir—Its Ornaments.

AMIGO MIO:—At twelve o'clock on the day of my arrival in the city of Tepic, having made myself feel as comfortable as possible, I strolled out from my hotel to take a bird's eye view of the town and its environs; but finding it too warm, I contented myself to call at the commercial House of Barron & Forbes, now under the superintendence of Señor John F. Allsopp, an Englishman by birth, though long a resident of Spanish and Mexican countries. To this gentleman I had a letter of introduction from the firm of Señors Echeguren & Co., of Mazatlan, and upon the house of Barron & Forbes a small draft; both of which on being presented received the immediate attention and favorable consideration of Señor Allsopp. I have found, amigo, this gentleman courteous, affable, attentive, bland and open in his deportment to others; although in consequence of the banishment of Señors Barron and Forbes, the whole financial superintendence of commercial and factory business, devolves necessarily on him to discharge; notwithstanding, in various branches of this business, I have had the pleasure of becoming acquainted with gentlemen of intelligence and practical experience. Among these gentlemen who

struck me most favorably, is William Collier, Esq., a native of the State of Massachusetts, to whose kind attention I was introduced by Señor Allsopp on my first call to see this *gentleman himself.* Señor Collier I shall mention again, not from his being a countryman of mine, but in connection with his family, his business, and the affairs of the country.

In the afternoon when it had become somewhat cool, I took a survey of the city and discovered it to be laid out mostly at right angles, with a public square or plaza nearly in the center.

The plaza is large, and fronting it on either side the buildings are generally two stories high, and many of them like the Fonda de Oro, have columns and arches, which greatly enhance the symmetrical and architectural arrangement of the square. Near the northeast corner of the plaza, I cast my eyes and saw a massive edifice, its spire tapering in the wandering clouds, with due and equal proportions, its base consumed the rich and fertile earth; aud the many gigantic stones and rocks united to the various parts of its construction, robbed the ancient quarries of those tell-tales, by which geology in her onward march, deciphers the countless ages heretofore passed on.

This is the church of catholic faith, where the devout and pious of heart kneel before their God and their saints in solemn devotion,—asking forgiveness of past sins,—and they are forgiven,—even the unholy publicans and ladrones that infest the Republic like vultures, and the pickpockets in the midst of the *saints.* From this sacred altar they depart various ways with a light heart; and the first opportunity presented, they commit the same sins again, and again they are piously forgiven, paying a small pittance for penitence's sake. Near the northwest corner of the plaza, I opened mine eyes and beheld el carcel de la ciudad, the

city prison, which is but one story high, large and commodious for the purposes intended. In front and on the roof de el carcel de la ciudad, there is ever a sentinel with an ample number of city guards at hand, to enforce order or insurrection, just as the whims and interests of the majority of the citizens may apparently desire or demand. So far as I have been able to observe the court-yards of the city prisons in this country, there is in each a number of heavy ordnance; and in this, and near the entrance, I saw one engineered for action. The object of such, so far as I could learn, is to silence as far as practicable political murmurings and to keep the malcontents in awe and submission. It is now tumultuous times in Tepic; for the two political parties seem to hate each other most bitterly, and as if they were not of one common country, and ever ready to assume any advantages, which the want of foresight or the weakness of the other party, failed to fortify and make continually tenable. [This is March, 1856.]

This I shall more definitely allude to in some more distant letter. However, there are now many prisoners incarcerated,—some for civil and criminal offences, and others for political offences against the new organization of the government under the auspices of Gen Comonfort; although many times individual parties make use of political ferments to revenge themselves upon those they both fear and dread. And this private, though ostensibly intended for public vengeance, may find its sneaking trail even on the beautiful plains of Anahuac, as elsewhere. The plaza embraces an area of four acres, and on either side between the street and the outside plaza walks, there are trees, but not fruit-bearing, set thirty feet apart, which extend their many limbs and green foliage far out, rendering the streets and the walks adjacent cool and inviting. The chief promenade of the plaza extends around its whole circuit, with

several others leading to the reservoir and playful fountain in the center, and corresponding with the *octangular* points of the compass.

These walks are permanently laid with flag stones; and on the outside of the principal promenade, seats are constructed of soft-burnt bricks in the same manner as those embracing la plaza at Mazatlan. The reservoir is large, and the water is clear and cool, and is much in use throughout the town. The domestics come hither from various parts of the city at evening twilight, with native earthern jars, some small, and others large; and some of these servants with one jar on the head, while others trudge along with a large jar suspended by the means of a thong to a pole, between two of them. Near this *holy* spot, in proximity to the church, I took my stand with an apparent nonchalance, and when I beheld the good and the bad, the fair and the homely, the young and the old, the sane and the maimed, domestics and servants pass me by, with all the peculiarities of expressions, contortions and evolutions imaginable;—I could not avoid thinking of the good old Samaritans, when going to the sacred pool to ask absolution. The fountain plays beautifully; and not unfrequently the sprays, at morning or evening, ascend so high that a miniature rainbow repays the observer for his attention. The reservoir is 20 feet in diameter and four feet high, composed of solid masonry,—the wall being two feet thick, laid in cement. At the base, flag stones are laid out six feet, forming thus a circular walk, which unites with those leading in from the principal promenade. A willow tree near this fountain and extending its graceful and waving branches over its cooling and inviting waters, caps the description of this beautiful square in the present number of my letters; yet again for a moment, I may allude to it with reference to other matters.

Feeling somewhat fatigued and sickened from too much exposure, I must beg to take a good farewell of my much esteemed friend, Agricola, for the present.

Adios,

Señor,

AGRICOLA.

CINCINNATUS.

LETTER XXVI.

Aspect of the City of Tepic from a high elevation—Its Extent—Mountain Springs—Streets—Chimnies—Architecture—Dwellings—Private Court Yards—Valley of Tepic—Volcanic Rocks—Soil—Productions—Famine—Sugar Estates—Machinery—Continuous Crops—Coffee Plantations—Pasturage—Fine Horses and Carriages—Holy Padre in a Carriage—Woodland—Fuel—Lumber—Fencing.

AMIGO MIO:—In my last I confined myself, or rather the work of my pen, to the city; but in this number I intend to take your imagination to some high elevation, where I can paint to your mind, the throne of reason, the beautiful and undulating valley of Tepic. I departed some distance from the town, when the heat of the day was being suspended, and the orb of light fast returning to his *rosy bed*, to feast my mind and instruct the powers of my reason with reference to the form of the city, the manner of its being laid out, its prominent edifices, and the general aspect and formation of the valley. The city seems to be situated on a champaign surface, and to be laid out somewhat with a view to right angles; notwithstanding, near the town rolling eminences protude in various shapes. The surface which it appears to occupy embraces the area of one square mile, and on the north side of it there is now the bed of a dry creek, which in the rainy season swells and foams, receiving mountain supplies, with great and violent impetuosity. By mountain springs rising not far distant from the city, Tepic is abundantly supplied with pure, cool, and crystal-like water. Springs in this valley are

remarkably bold and forcible; for northwest of the city, near two miles, there is one which bursting forth with incredible velocity, as if it had been some pent up torrent finding an opening, and ere it runs two miles, increases to such a volume by a few feeders, that it assumes the character of a small river, dashing and foaming over volcanic rocks and boulders, till it finds its devious way to el Rio de Santiago. The streets are narrow, and also the side walks; the former are laid with round cobble stones near three inches in diameter, in a kind of cement, and in a concave form, so that the rain water runs off through the center of the street; and the latter are laid with soft-burnt bricks or flag stones, and usually in a workmanlike manner. The entire width of the streets to the side walks on either side of the street varies from four to five feet, which adjustment of the streets and walks makes it quite inconvenient for carts and carriages, and also foot persons, passing each other. Scarcely throughout the whole city can you see a chimney, which in the assumed order of architecture in the United States presents a finished and symetrical beauty to dwelling houses.

The custom among the Spaniards and Mexicans, with reference to not having chimneys attached to their dwellings, had its origin far back, even among the Persians, the Greeks and Romans; and cooking out of the main building with charcoal in hot climates, is to some extent coupled with the rise and growth of this custom. The buildings in this city vary much in height; some are two stories high, while others are but one.

The private dwellings among the rich or wealthier class, have court-yards in the center with columns, arches, balconies, and balustrades, suitable to the construction and number of stories; and frequently, where taste and the least pretension to elegance in ornamenting the court yards, bear

a prominent sway, and rather a controling influence,—the fair and happy inmates make delicate collections of flowering plants, shrubs and trees, which they most generally adjust with their own snowy hands most beautifully on the balustrades and near the crystal fountains. Within these court-yards the fair and virtuous matrons and young ladies of Anahuac promenade at the rising or the setting sun, or when nature requires of them exercise to promote their health and give them a cheer uncommon to sedentary habits. Even on this elevation, amigo, I can see no more prominent buildings than those which my pen has already described; therefore we will cast our eyes to the extent and surface of the valley of Tepic. It is my impression from conversation had with intelligent gentleman, that this valley, including some eminences and rolling hills, extends over an area of ten miles square. The high elevations, and even many of the low hills in proximity to the city, carry with them the indisputable evidence of being volcanic; and porous, flint, and sandstone rocks abound in the valley, and border the rim of the mountainous districts; where, in some of which, granite plainly shows its hoary locks. The soil being composed of *debris* and the decomposition of vegetable matter, is fertile and quick, most beyond conception; although it is badly and *profanely* used by Mexican husbandmen; for with the soil as with a horse, when once broken in, seldom do they get much rest till their natures are nearly exhausted; then they are unthoughtfully turned out to, or on, the commons to resuscitate themselves as the elements of their own natural affinity may require.

The valley is cultivated in a variety of productions natural to this climate, either in low or high altitudes. In the low altitudes, being near one thousand feet above the level of the sea, sugar cane, coffee, cotton, rice, sweet potatos and

corn, are considerably grown; but not in sufficient quantities to glut the market or produce a superabundance for the season. This want of foresight and disposition to plant plentifully, even for to-morrow, existing among the Mexican people, most forcibly stamps their natural indolence upon intelligent minds of other nations, which too frequently engenders disease, as famine and starvation in many departments and in seasons of great dearth, ensue, producing unheard of distress and almost general consternation.

In the higher altitudes and the districts adjacent, corn, wheat, barley, oats, beans and Irish potatos, abound and flourish with a remarkable exuberance of growth, and apparently with little care or foresight. In proportion to the ground planted, however, it must be understood that these productions, as well as the others just mentioned, abound; for there is not always a plenty. In the vicinity of the city, there are sugar estates, which yield well, so far as soil and growth are concerned, but the machinery and implements made use of, both inside and outside of the sugar houses, would indicate their method scarcely any in advance of the most primitive mode of sugar-making in the West India Islands, or the State of Louisiana, when the cane was first introduced into those regions by the Spaniards. It is usual to make large quantities of panéla into small cakes for eating by hand; and these are much used among the lower classes, when eating their regular meals of beef, cooked with Chili pepper, corn-cakes and water. Mexican sugar planters make also large quantities of loaf-sugar,—the process of which is, after the cane juice is boiled to a granulating consistency, to pour it into earthen jars made in the form of a cone, where it cools and the impurities in it run out through the lower part of the jar, perforated for the purpose. After this, these cakes are placed on scaffolds

out in the sun and air, when the atmosphere is dry, in order that the drainage may be still further promoted. However, this process cannot strip them of their numerous specks and impurities. I saw no sugar either brown or white, during my sojourn and observations in several departments of more than four months, which, in respect to quality, could favorably compare with the Louisiana or Texas sugars.

In describing the machinery for making sugars, and other requirements about a sugar house, I do not mean to say that these planters have none of the requisites; but simply, not those which the arts and sciences have invented and made known to the world of late years. Mexican sugars are generally worth from ten to fifteen cents per pound, making but little difference whether purchased on la hacienda or in town. I have seen no molasses nor syrup in the country. I should not omit to observe, that the planting of sugar cane may be so arranged in many parts of districts adapted to its culture, with reference to its growth and ripening, where irrigation is attainable, that the planters may be engaged in the process of making sugar full two-thirds of the year. Such advantages in favor of Louisiana and Texas sugar-cane planters, would be hailed there as considerations of great and paramount importance.

Small coffee plantations are springing into existence in the region of Tepic, and one large plantation of coffee not far from the city is being cultivated and enlarged by the house of Castaños, that have figured so much at different times in Tepic for the last thirty years. But I am under the impression, from what I could learn from one of the family, a young man well instructed in the classic branches of an English, a French and a Spanish education, that he or the family are not much versed in the scientific agriculture which, as adapted to tropical regions, should be carefully studied and well understood. He informed me that

they had set their coffee trees from four to six feet apart, and let them grow as high as the nature of the tree would seem to demand, instead of setting them out eight or nine feet apart, clipping the tops off when six feet high, for the convenience of gathering the coffee, and pruning them twice,—or, at least, once a year, in order to equalize and make sure a certain amount of coffee each year.

Grazing and the rearing of cattle, horses, sheep, and hogs, are much attended to, and they are grown in quantities to supply only the common demand of the country. Pasturage is generally good, yet here, as in the State of California, there is the wet and dry season. So far as I could observe, I noticed no improvement in stock of any kind above that among the Upper Californians. If I noticed fine carriage horses, caparisoned with tacklings tipped with gold, attached to coaches, showing a finished workmanship, and inquired whence they came? I was answered "from the United States." In fact, all the good horses here in use are either imported from the United States or from England. In this respect, I must confess I could not repress a smile to see a Catholic bishop in Tepic ride in a finely finished and polished coach, drawn by two well-matched, large and beautiful bays, richly caparisoned, and to learn that but a short time previous they were all imported from the United States, the land of heretics. My amusement at this, was still more heightened to observe the sacred personage thus seated, pass along the streets, and the half-starved and half-clad populace, with hats off, hurry their already quickened pace to keep up with the coach; and when it stopped incidentally, to behold them,—young and old—lame and blind, all in imitation, kneel to either reverence the Bishop in his sacred gown, or his *bedazzling equipage*. And for my life, I could not tell which they preferred to worship. I thought that this showed a faltering in the Catholic faith, or a *bias in favor of light*.

Woodland in the region of Tepic, seems to be scarce. I could not see much, nor clumps of trees growing in the valley, or on the low hills, and but scattering clusters on the higher elevations. Most of the fuel consumed here is brought in from some distance in the form of charcoal, and scarcely any is required except for culinary purposes. There are no trees for lumber or fencing in the immediate valley of Tepic; but at a distance towards the coast a great variety of forest trees abound; and also, in the regions of higher altitude, cedar and pine forests become abundant, and lumber of these kinds is often conveyed one hundred, and even two hundred miles, on two wheeled carts drawn by oxen, for the purpose of adding a finish to dwelling houses. The manner of fencing in *uno rancho ó una hacienda*, is generally pursued by making use of the numerous stones which lay strewed over the hills and plains, quite in plentiful profusion. The stone walls are substantial and near five feet high, tapering in their ascent. I have often rode miles in the stage, passing haciendas walled in by volcanic rocks.

In my next, it will be my purpose to give you some description of Barron & Forbes' Cotton Factory, not far from Tepic, in a northward direction; some account of the Superintendent, Señor Collier, and of other American mechanics engaged at the Factory.

Adios,

Señor,

AGRICOLA.

CINCINNATUS.

LETTER XXVII.

Hiring a Coach to visit La Fabrica de Algadon de Barron y Forbes—Drive about the City—Suburbs—The Country and aspect of the Factory—Factory Buildings and Appurtenances—Superintendent—Cotton used, both Domestic and Foreign—Country adapted to Cotton.

AMIGO MIO:—In the afternoon of a beautiful day, while remaining in Tepic, a traveling friend and myself hired a coach with two gay and beautiful horses, reined up and in prancing trim, with a genteel or gentle looking coachman, to take a drive out to the Factory. Around the public square, there are usually six or eight coaches, rather unique in form, and perhaps even here, some of them dating back to time immemorial. They are kept for public use, and let out for fifty cents per hour; which, to a foreigner and a stranger in the land, is no small consideration in the way of convenience. In comparison with San Francisco or California prices, we thought we had engaged our coach drive remarkably cheap. This coach had windows on either side, in such a manner that we could observe the streets and houses as we were passing along.

To enjoy a full sight of the city, and that too without much *cost* or *price*, we requested the coachman to make himself busy in driving us far *round-about* for one or two hours, prior to directing his course to the Factory. In this short, yet quite full excursion, I am not aware that we saw

anything but in confirmation of what I have already expressed in my previous letters with reference to Tepic. Riding through Mexican cities, except at evening, sensibly reminds one of a city of prisons; the thick walls, strong doors, and iron gratings for windows, adding to that effect. The *blues* are if I mistake not, a common complaint in Mexico; and I should not be surprised if such *mansions* for the figurative deed were not instrumental in the unique promotion of that disease.

Resuming our drive as intended, to the Factory, we soon passed from the Plaza rather north-west of the city, and through the environs where poorer but honest classes dwell; and even where the thieves, *ladrones* and pickpockets hold forth their haunts in hellish planning, and watch the movements available for the commission of marauding excursions and acquisitions.

Passing along at a slow trot for the purpose of observing, we soon reached the bed of a comparatively dry creek, and in our descent to it we found the surface of the bed considerably broken; and after our passage over its stony cavity, we struck a somewhat higher and more even surface, and then riding along leisurely we soon came up to the boundary and entrance of the Factory premises. The walls on either side are strong, and the gate ostensibly indicates labor and skill in the construction of its parts. Near the gate there is a watch-house where a sentinel, who, if suspicion is awakened by any óvert acts of parties coming here, reports it by a faithful discharge of a gun, and this causes the factory *people* to be on the alert, and prepared for emergencies. The road from this to the establishment is one-half mile and is well macadamized, so that a carriage plays off easily over the bridge which *covers* the stream used for thr propulsion of the whole apparatus of the factory, and other mechanical appurtenances. The form of

the ground about the factory is somewhat elliptic; and the surface rough, and that too, on both sides of the rivulet, which is encompassed by high hills, with the exception of the narrow gulch that serves as a passage for a private road leading to a cotton factory, still farther below and on the same stream. The whole establishment is thus enclosed by high stone walls. The great object of the wall is self-protection against incursions liable to be made upon the factory by the *ladrones*, who would either set it on fire, or sack and plunder it of the new made fabrics, and then fire it through natural malevolence.

The factory building is two hundred feet by two hundred, in the form of a square, with a court-yard in the center, one hundred feet by one hundred, in the same form; so that the apartments on either side are fifty feet wide, and as long as the objects for which they are designed, may necessarily require. The Superintendent of the whole establishment is Señor Collier, who more or less henceforward, will require the special or casual notice of my pen in my description of Tepic. The garden near the factory and attached to it rather as an ornament, is also under his supervision, and it will soon require specific notice in carrying out the full intention of these letters. The factory is a building of two stories high, consisting of thick walls, numerous doors and windows adapted for convenience and light, and finally, rooms and apartments requisite for the labors and locomotion usually performed and *endured* in like establishments elsewhere.

The Superintendent informed me while I was here on this visit, that there were different mechanical shops connected with this factory, and possessing skillful machinists, that had proved themselves adapted to the full performance of any work necessarily required to complete such an apparatus. The cost of such machinery delivered from the

nearest Mexican port, must have been attended with outlays enough to dampen the fire even of the most selfish, if not the farthest-sighted. The locomotive powers applied to the movement of this whole apparatus from day to day during the year, consist of two water wheels forty feet in diameter, having at all seasons a sufficient volume of water for the execution of the objects of the factory. The masonry of the dam, the flume and the canal for carrying off the waste water, as well as the butments, arches, and the foundation of the whole building, indicates a solid permanency and a skillfulness in the adjustment of its stones, which mechanics of this class in far more favored countries seldom equal and never excel. The roof of this establishment is constructed in the same manner as those of solid and durable buildings are generally in this country. The walls extend three feet above the level of the roof, and are two feet thick as below; these are then plastered over with a species of hydraulic cement, which renders them a solid mass. This roof thus constructed has on it every night a watchful sentinel with a carbine on his shoulder to give the alarm; and in times of threatening danger, it is garrisoned with a sufficient quantity of artillery and men to protect the place at night or day quite securely against freebooters, within the range of five hundred yards. Attached to the factory there is a cotton-gin imported from the United States, which is as necessary an accompaniment in this strange country, where cotton planters have never seen one, as cards to the adjustment of cotton rolls, or the spindle to the making of thread.

My admiration I must confess, when I had taken a full survey of the apartments adapted for spindles and looms, was sensibly affected to behold here a system of labor pursued and executed of which the most enlightened should be justly proud. That admiration and my astonishment

were greatly enhanced when I had paused a moment and fully considered the present and past condition of this people; for in these apartments each Mexican operative seemed to be trained to the exercise of a good degree of practical reason and intelligence. The class of Mexicans in this factory consist mostly of those tinged with various shades of complexion, except that which would characterise them for white; therefore from this view of them arose my admiration and astonishment.

As I was informed by the Superintendent, the number of looms employed in the factory does not exceed one hundred and ten, and the other appurtenances for keeping the looms continually in operation are in the same proportion. With reference to the number of Mexican operatives, and of foreign mechanics and machinists, under the superintendence of Señor Collier, there are two hundred of the former and ten of the latter, who are native born Americans, and mostly represent the Old Bay State. As near as I could learn, these Americans are good, peaceable, sober and intelligent gentlemen, who are generally treated well by the Mexicans, and who observe those rules of courtesy towards them in return in Tepic, as should characterize Americans in any foreign land.

The expense attached to running this establishment per week, I have been told, amounts to near twelve hundred dollars, aside from the purchase of the raw cotton. Most of the cotton used here is the growth of a foreign culture; yet, of late years, some attention is paid to the growing of cotton on the bottom lands of el Rio de Santiago, and not far from the coast between San Blas and the port of Manzanillo. Native cotton of fine fibre and clean, is generally worth five cents a pound in the seed; although sometimes, it is not so high. Cotton domestics manufactured in this Factory bear the medium price of twenty-five cents per yard; though higher and lower at times. The firm of

Barron & Forbes are in the habit of sending directly to Peru, which source of getting most of their present supplies of fine cotton they have not, as I am informed, yet abandoned. To an American accustomed, as I have been, to living in a climate congenial to the culture of this staple, and seeing men there active and industrious in the rapid advancement not only of their own interest, but that of one common country, by being producers, it seems really a waste of God's fertile earth, within the tropics and the most congenial climate to the full development of such productions, to behold here a scarcity—a want of such supplies, and the necessity of sending to foreign lands to fill home demands! And what are these home demands with reference to cotton? They are simply made to consist of the *precious materials* which are manufactured into cloths, to hide nakedness and warm the human system!

A people to be rich, prosperous and happy in reality, should cultivate, if practicable, all the absolute necessaries of life for consumption, and the raw materials requisite for garments; and if they cannot, they should cultivate what they can possibly, and then manufacture what they have grown, and pursue commerce. For the accomplishment of these great national considerations, it is absolutely necessary to be industrious; and moreover, it is of paramount importance that this industry should be protected by good, wholesome, and liberal laws duly executed under the safeguards embodied in the concession of natural powers, or private rights.

Fearing I may weary your patience too much, amigo mio, I will allow you a short rest ere I resume your attention.

Adios,

Señor,

AGRICOLA.

CINCINNATUS.

LETTER XXVIII.

Pleasure Ground near the Factory—Its Ornaments—Fountain with Gold Fish—Residence of Señor Collier and Family—Effect of Climate on the White Race—Their Mode of Living—Fruits—Hospitality of Señor Collier—Other Americans.

AMIGO MIO :—Again I resume my pen in this distant land to be the medium of intelligence to you, my most indulgent friend.

Opposite to, and east of the factory, is a stone wall with a fine yet substantial gate for the entrance, leading into a beautiful garden, consisting of five acres of rich earth, and laid out in a manner truly tasteful and elegant. This *high* wall extends around the whole of the pleasure-ground, which on first observing the situation, indicates something of durability. There is one promenade extending around the inside of the garden, yet near to the wall, intervening which and the walk a beautiful rill of clear water is let in at pleasure, and runs its gentle course over small pebbles of various shapes and hues, ever ready to moisten and nourish the fertile ground. In passing through this pleasure-ground where this should seem to conflict with the even design of the walk, brick arches are gracefully turned over it to enhance *surrounding beauty* and a covenience to the pleasure of promenading. There are two other walks extending through this retreat of honorable pride, which

correspond with the cardinal points of the compass, dividing the ground into four equal compartments. Besides these walks which are eight feet wide, I beheld in observing more particularly, these four squares laid out with regular curve walks five feet wide, and uniting with the others at right angles. Small pebble stones are covered over the surface of each promenade. Grass, always kept green, tinges selected spots over this surface, and fringing the borders of all these walks, it unites with the choice and peculiar collection of plants, shrubs and trees within, from Asia, Europe, the Islands of the Atlantic, different parts of America, the Islands of the Pacific, Australia, and, I should not omit in this, Africa. Standing in the midst of this beautiful spot, near a playful fountain of crystal water, and surrounded by the rare growths which nature, in her great laboratory, is constantly producing, and has been made from different quarters of the earth to contribute here by the science of navigation and of vital retention in plants, to a captious, yet refined sensibility,—I could not but admire and applaud in my own mind, the delicate taste displayed in the adjustment of these far brought productions. I must own I was most happily pleased to observe more closely this taste in the arrangement of those plants requiring the most care, and the promiscuous, forest-like adjustment of those trees which tower not too high, yet sufficiently lofty to combine due proportions. These natives and exotics are either evergreen by nature, or are kept so by the remarkable evenness of the temperature, and irrigation when required during the dry season.

Among this rare and beautiful collection, which struck most impressively my acquaintanceship with their kinds, I noticed the climbing and Castillian rose bushes, daisies, hyacinths, myrtles, junipers, and palms, with pinks of various shades of color, showing a peculiar and unique impregna-

tion. Near the Siberian cedar and crab, I saw the cocoa, palm, the northern spy, the orange, the lime, tamarind and citron trees. Near the cedar of Lebanon, I saw the acacia, the different species of custard apple, the cacao, and coffee trees, with the fruit-bearing plants the plantain and banana. Each of these plants, shrubs and trees, has its respective spot in contributing to the general embellishment of this pleasure ground. There also, I saw successfully cultivated the British Queen strawberry plants, which begin to give their fruit the first of March; and with care, being properly shaded when too warm, and watered when too dry, they might be made almost a continuous luxury for table use. Near the center of the garden, there is a reservoir of pure, yet perhaps not holy water, ten feet deep and twenty feet wide, made of masonry, in the form of a circle, solid and well cemented. This fountain is fed by an under current, which emanates from the Factory stream, and has a descent of twenty feet; and through a brass tube having a boss on the end, which is perforated with holes, jets are made to ascend the height of its source, which play in the air most beautifully, and when falling they dart off in all directions, presenting miniature rainbows and showers, that greatly enhance the whole scene. In this fountain, I saw the gold fish, so called from their brilliant color in resemblance to that precious metal. They seemed unbounded in the peculiarity of their graceful, yet easy evolutions, so common to them, and perfectly delighted in their small yet natural prison element; for these were all young ones,—the progenitors having died shortly after transition and giving natality to this young and brilliant progeny, numbering near twenty in all.

Many ladies and gentlemen, and many of those who might be ranked among the scum of God's creation, come hither in carriages, costly and fashionable; while others, if there

is a pedigree in the history of carriages, might date their uniqueness to immemorial time for archetypes. In this spot, adorned with foresight and protective care, these several classes seem to enjoy the gay, the beautiful, and busy scene of the Factory, with all its appurtenances, and the garden with all its collections and symmetrical arrangements, crowned by the vocal music of unceasing warblers, clad in the plumage of many hues, and hopping from limb to limb, and from tree to tree, indicating all the playful evolutions and varied notes of refined animal instinct.

Opposite to the Factory, though on the north side, with a private road between, is the residence of Wm. Collier, Esq., the Superintendent. He is married to an American lady of the city of Philadelphia, in the State of Pennsylvania. Several years since, he was married, and has now a family of six children born here. Most commonly they are healthy; however, during the rainy season, Señor Collier informed me there were some cases of the chills and fever. Without doubt, the countenance becomes perceptibly tinged within the tropics, except by great care constantly and thoughtfully exercised; but not so, as some inconsiderate enthusiasts endeavor to hold forth, as to make a *negro race* out of a *white one;* for even here, the new born child of white parents, *turns up white also!* I found Mrs. Collier rather ill, suffering from the neuralgia, and also the paralysis in her arms, yet able to sit up part of the time, and converse with me respecting the prosperity of, and rapid advancement made in the United States, embracing a more complete development of the arts and sciences, and in rendering them subservient to supply the real or imaginary wants of man. She drew many comparisons between the two countries; seemed to be well informed as to the general concernments of her father-land; and often she had sighed to be there, though interest prompted her to tarry in another land for a while.

Mrs. Collier has a lone sister living with her for a time, though she is married to Capt. Hale. This gentleman has been for a short period, engaged in trade on the Pacific coast, from Valparaiso to San Francisco. Señoras Collier and Hale, are accomplished and intelligent ladies, and having a good collection of English and Spanish books, they indulge themselves in reading what is food for the mind, and thus do their husbands interest and instruct themselves when their business permits. Their dwelling house is furnished most tastefully, with all that really adds neatness and welcomeness to home, and secures a good man there. Americans having lived for a long time in a foreign country, are very apt to adopt somewhat the mode of living and cooking which the creoles of that country usually practice.

While here, I noticed some new dishes which are not much in use in the United States; such as guava, plantains and bananas stewed, fried or baked; and that meats and bread were rather bordering on the mode of living pursued by the upper class of Mexicans. Some of their cookery consist of the following: Tortilla, pan de huevos, ensaláda de tortilla, ensaláda de carné, arroz de carné, quesadillas, sopa de pan, ensaláda de piscada de tierra, and pan de trigo. Ensaláda is composed of Chili peppers, fat, cheese, onions, or garlics, water, and sometimes tomatos, all stewed together. Their conserves or las conservas de los Mexicanos are frequently made out of the fruit of the banana, which is boiled to the consistency of paste, and then taken from the kettle and put into a tray where it is kneaded with whitish sugar till it assumes a glutinous form; then it is taken out and put into small wooden boxes neatly made, and offered for sale under the name of "la conserva de banana de *Mejicana*." In this conserve I noticed properties adapted to nurture the human system, far beyond what one's reasonable presumption would lead him to conceive

in this plant. For my own part, I am fond of a variety of dishes at different times, and think that a plenty of cooked fruit at all times, is intended by Providence to be highly promotive of good health and elastic constitutions.

While contemplating the residence of Señor Collier, I must not omit to acknowledge those kind and individual attentions so fully expressed, which enliven the lone heart and which make an American in a foreign land feel proud of his countrymen. Scarcely an American passes through Tepic, but he is made to feel those cordial and generous hearts that throb in the often threatened, yet happy home just mentioned. In the city of Tepic at the Hotel, and near the house of Barron & Forbes, I had the pleasure of becoming acquainted with Dr. Cleaveland, and another Capt. Hale, who is also engaged in trade on the coast. These gentlemen are Americans, and so far as I could observe, they were bland, affable, and courteous; and appeared to be attentive to their respective avocations.

This personage I did not become acquainted with while in Tepic; it is the wife of Señor Forbes, a Mexican lady [illegible] good catholic. I am told that she has but few equals [illegible] Republic of Mexico, who can compare with her for [illegible] ostentatious display of her many virtues, and kind [illegible]nly offices to the poor, sick, and decrepid, in the region which comes within her reach.

Adios,

Señor,

AGRICOLA.

CINCINNATUS.

LETTER XXIX.

Intent of these Letters—Ladrones—Enmity between the House of Barron & Forbes and that of Castaños—Rise of Comonfort—Principles governing him—Their growth in Tepic—Escape of Barron & Forbes from Tepic—Alertness of the Castaños Party—An attempt to ship Money without paying the Inland Duties—Dangerous for Americans at the Factory in the Winter of 1855-6—Attack of Ladrones on Señors Collier and Hale, in the Stage, going to San Blas—Objects of it—Its Discovery and consequence on Señor Collier—Reported Conspiracy in Tepic, while there in March, 1856.

AMIGO MIO:—It is my purpose in these letters, amigo, to be solely the medium of information; let that information eminate from, or touch whatsoever object or person or persons it might. However, with reference to political antagonists, malcontents and revolutionists, so far as I may deem it necessary or interesting, I intend to impart the grounds each party assumes, without the advancement of my own opinion, except in such case as I may feel myself fully warranted from the sources of information presented to my notice. In a previous letter, when about to take the stage at San Blas, to find my way into the interior, I mentioned that we, composed of the party with me, heard on our arrival at this port that the stage had been attacked only a few days prior to that time, and that too, within the sound of fire-arms from Tepic; and also our decision and determination to meet the consequences, come as they might. Before this period, I had mentioned two political parties and two commercial houses in Tepic, that have ever

been at swords' point, even more than an age past. The names of these houses are that of Barron & Forbes and that of Castaños. The former house has ever been a strong supporter of Gen. Santa Anna's party,—and the latter the firm backer of opposite political aspirants.

It is for the historian's pen to eke out the relative or absolute merits of those who have been, and of him who is swaying the destinies of these people, whether for weal or woe; but not for mine so generally. I have here a special object only in view.

As General Comonfort departed from the discharge of his official functions in the Custom House at Acapulco, and assumed the badge of distinguishment,—he arose under the auspices of the old and wily hero, Gen. Alvarez, also near that port, in the early part of the year 1855, and soon becoming known and distinguished apart from Gen. Alvarez, he took city after city in the tide of his march, and playing with Alcaldes as puppets to fill his political aspirations, he made easy terms with the occupants, demanding of them but what stern necessity enforced him to request, in order to carry out his measures of reform. The liberal and political principles espoused and openly expressed by Gen. Comonfort, quickly spread over the fair yet tax-ridden plains of Anahuac, like the spark that touches the vast *pampas*, and slowly kindling, soon with its indomitable surgings, overwhelms man and animal in one universal consternation; thus the party then in power, that of Gen. Santa Anna, had risen and spread their influence over the country, which now began to falter and grow remarkably unpopular with the masses of the people; for it was far more opposed to the popular rights and privileges than that fast rising to its zenith, in order to effect a general overthrow of past anarchy.

This political ferment and reformation immediately took

root in Tepic, and grew to the size of a most sturdy *oak*, which as yet, the chill winds nor the northern blasts have influenced to change its verdure. As near as I could learn from my informant, with refence to this matter in Tepic on both sides, I feel it a duty and a moral right to make known to the public through the medium of you, Agricola. My informant states that last Fall, (1855) the firm of Barron & Forbes, being desirous of making a large shipment of silver out of the country, to San Francisco, where it was worth ten per cent. premium, without paying the inland duty of ten per cent. on the whole amount, which would have made the sum due the government, forty thousand dollars, they had resource to old practices, that of bribing or endeavoring to bribe the collector of the interior, by paying him a small pittance to let the silver pass out unnoticed. The Comonfort party being constantly on the alert, and ever ready to take all the advantages which the new organization of the goverment would barely warrant,—became informed of the intention of Barron & Forbes; and aware of the inimical hatred expressed by the Santa Anna party to this reform,—they pursued with redoubled vigor and alertness the designs of the new government to collect its inland duties.

As my informant states, the collector was bribed and engaged to depart the city a few days on a trip of pleasure or supposable business, till full arrangements with regard to this shipment could be made and executed. Being somewhat afraid that their plans might miscarry, this firm had retained a force in their power and subject to their control, to act as emergencies might seem to require, while they were occupied in the execution of this large commercial operation. Their plans before executed fully, leaked out, and the Governor of the State of Jalisco, being at the capital, Guadalajara, sent a military force to arrest this oper-

ation by seizing the intended shipment, and the principals engaged in the transaction, if possibly found.

The sum of one hundred thousand dollars was seized and confiscated to public use; but Barron and Forbes being made aware of the Governor's design to arrest them, made their most fortunate escape to San Blas and effected an immediate departure for Mazatlan, where the political reform had not progressed so rapidly; where there was a different state of feeling expressed towards these gentlemen from Tepic; and where they were sojourning in March last, 1856, as expelled consuls, commercial representatives of Great Britain and the United States.

Up to this time, no reconciliation had been effected between these parties; but a disposition to widen the breach and make it almost irreparable has strongly manifested itself from the time of Barron and Forbes' departure for San Blas, ever since in the city of Tepic. This political and commercial animosity had run so high through the winter, and threatening dangers had become more apparent;—and these supposed to emanate from irresponsible sources—that Señor Collier deemed it so unsafe for his family at his residence near the Factory, in view of the many threats having been made against the Americans solely, who were engaged there, to the effect that at certain times they were all to be murdered, that he with his brother-in-law, Capt. Hale, took their families to San Blas, to be ready as the occasion and the emergency might dictate them to pursue. In a month afterwards, peace to some extent having been restored, as immediately and threatening dangers had apparently passed the cloudy horizon to give room for the flag of truce to come in, and mediate its good offices between a people of one kindred tie and blood, of one kindred language, and of one common interest,—Señor Collier and Hale thought it now safe to leave Tepic, in order

to go to San Blas for their families. Accordingly, they got ready, arming themselves as usual in traveling from place to place in this country, and departed in the stage at eleven o'clock at night for San Blas. They had scarcely passed the suburbs of the city, ere they were attacked by a band of *ladrones*, twenty in number; the coach was fired through fifteen times, with a very slight injury to Señor Collier,—Señor Hale was seized and dragged out of the stage and somewhat bruised, and his pockets searched closely, and an attempt to search Señor Collier's was made, but the horses soon started, and so that object was averted. They were robbed of two gold watches worth four hundred dollars, besides guns, pistols, and clothing to the amount of two hundred dollars more.

It was quite dark, and therefore it was rather difficult to recognise any of the robbers; although their burnished carbines and lances too strongly indicated that they were no common ladrones. It was, at this time, supposed that Señors Collier and Hale were bearers of important despatches to San Blas, to be conveyed to Barron & Forbes at Mazatlan. Whether this be true or not, I do not pretend to state; therefore I have given its substance as I heard it. And under this impression, it has been believed by many intelligent ones, that the Comonfort or Castaños party were cognizant of the fact of this attack being contemplated on these two Americans, and in consequence of which they were believed to be accessory to the crime—that of plundering American citizens within the sound of gun-shot from one of their flourishing inland towns. How true this may be, or the amount of truth in it, I do not pretend to define; but that it looks highly colorable with an avowed intent to do these gentlemen some particular harm, appears more than probable; for they were alone in the stage, an incident for two to be alone, rarely common. The

search having ended without making the ladrones any wiser, they were allowed to pass on, and arrived without further molestation in San Blas the next morning. If the ladrones had desired to kill these gentlemen, or treat them even more severely, no resistance on their part could have availed them anything.

Having returned with their families to their residence near the Factory, and having exercised as much precaution as the circumstances of their peculiar position would indicate or warrant, the next object of these gentlemen was, as soon as practicable, to ascertain the actual names of the parties engaged in the robbery. In a few days afterwards, finding where some of the guns and pistols had been sold or pawned, they were thereby led to quite a full development of the entire scheme, showing the specific suppositions heretofore alluded to, to be satisfactorily correct. Several of the party engaged in the attack became alarmed, and offered to settle the matter before it was known generally who the parties were; but this arrangement did not meet the consent of the parties robbed, and therefore one of the chief leaders, a noted rascal at playing double handed games in political matters, was denounced by Señor Collier as being one of the party of said ladrones. The police authorities were bound to take notice of the fact as affirmed, and this necessarily connected the whole affair with the ruling party in Tépic. But a few days prior to this, a report of a conspiracy got up against this Tepic party, was pretended to have been discovered on Sunday evening, the formation of which, and the manner of acting, leaked out through an old lady; and upon which report, immediate action was taken. Some twenty of the principal citizens of the opposite party, were then incarcerated, and the entire population of the city thrown into general consternation. Señor Collier was then at his residence,

attending to the numerous vocations which his duty as Superintendent of the Factory necessarily required of him. The Castaños or ruling party, having discovered the dilemma they had got the present administration in, now most patriotically desired to shake from themselves any responsibilities which might rise and flow from the circumstances of the case when made a knot of diplomatic contention, and an object of demand on the part of the United States' government. For in the extension of her treaty stipulations over her citizens residing in foreign countries, she fully and absolutely guarantees their individual protection, and security in the peaceable enjoyment of their acquisitions. To effect these ends, the government of the United States appoints generally efficient men as high officials, with special powers to watch, in foreign lands, her own interests and welfare, and those of her citizens. The ruling party in Tepic, in order to compass the end alluded to, were instrumental in having Señor Collier implicated in the conspiracy but shortly mentioned in a prior paragraph, and denounced by the ladrone, who, only a few days before, had been denounced by himself and imprisoned in *el carcel de la ciudad* by the police authorities. That the sufficiency of an oath of a robber, or one laboring under that accusation in the confines of a prison, could be received and acted upon in any civilized country, to the effect of arresting a person, even supposed to be guilty, before the party denounced or accused is finally acquitted and restored to citizenship, is a question which should put a savage horde to the blush!

The case of Señor Collier thus mooted, passed on till Tuesday night at 12 o'clock, when a policeman came to the gate of his residence, desiring to see him on pretended business; his reply was couched in laconic terms, that there had been, and perhaps would be, day-light enough to transact ordinary business; and as for any other, he was not

aware that he had made himself obligatory to any individual. The policeman departed for the night, deeming himself insufficient to wheedle Señor Collier into a snare at that time of the night; though the next morning, another came with a request from the Alcalde, the chief of the police, desiring Señor Collier to repair to the city on special business, as if related to some concernment of pressing, vital importance.

When Señor Collier had arrived and presented himself to the Alcalde, he was informed more *specifically* of the denouncement made by the *ladrone*, whereupon he was cast into prison without a hearing; without even being confronted by *him* who had made the charge of his having been connected with the conspiracy, and in fact, without any of the formal solemnities by the means of which a man could possibly know how to confront the allegations which, in a country like this, might be brought against him by the *vicious* and the *pampered!* Señor Collier was not thrown into the common city prison, but into that in another part of the city, where the others accused of conspiracy were incarcerated. When he was taken from his home and employment, his wife had been ill some time, and mostly confined to her sick chamber; he himself had served the firm of Barron & Forbes in the special capacity of Superintendent of their cotton factory;—not in that of a political intriguer or meddler with the affairs of the Government. He had lived near the city of Tepic for fifteen years, and had during that time borne an unblemished moral character; and further he had never been known during his residence here, as having been, or being connected with either party of the Government; but as throwing himself solely on the protection guaranteed by the treaty stipulations between the two Governments. In a day or so after his imprisonment, I was allowed the special privilege of visiting

and holding conversation with him, though in the presence of three other room-mates, and of one of the Castaños family who understood English. Many questions were put to this Señor Castaños with reference to the nature of the charges prefered against Señor Collier; but nothing definite could be inferred. When he was told that in any enlightened country, the oath of a prisoner could not be taken until the guilt of that accusation was absolved from him, he simply replied that Mexicans were governed by circumstances. When he was informed that the Mexican Government would be made responsible for the attack made on Señors Collier and Hale, and for the false imprisonment of an innocent American citizen, he shrugged his shoulders and said that he did not know; though he seemed somewhat surprised to think for a moment that the United States Government should hear of this case. Upon this, he was further informed that the United States had many children scattered over the earth among all nations; and in case of their *happening* to live among *civilized people*, it was the policy of their government to fully watch over them by her international treaties and compacts entered into by the consenting parties, in the same manner, and as effectually as if they were living under the banner of many stars and stripes. Even this young Castaños, who seemed to be a gentleman of refined sensibility, could not as he frankly stated, belive Señor Collier guilty of any offence; but he observed that it had, at this critical conjuncture of political affairs and intense municipal commotion, become necessary to gather evidence, to hear testimony, and decide with the weight of proof either in favor or disfavor. Never before was I in a prison where citizens for political offences had been incarcerated, and this present spectacle before me, taking a view of the whole matter, I must confess had a sad, sickening effect upon my spirits, to be sensible of the un-

just imprisonment of one of my own countrymen, with twenty Mexicans of rank and character, confined in different apartments, under the strictest surveillance of Mexican guards. Not less than one hundred guards were on constant duty; a cannon ever engineered for instant action at the entrance of the prison, and several others in the rear; much ceremony was necessary before one could be permitted to see or converse with a friend; and at night in approaching within a square of the prison, the watch-word of the patrol was given, and it became absolutely necessary to respond satisfactorily to it, or stand still until he came up before passing on as intended.

Adios,

Señor,

AGRICOLA.

CINCINNATUS.

LETTER XXX.

Factory Operatives discharged when Señor Collier was Imprisoned—Its effects—Present at the Searching of the Factory—Appearance of the Soldiers—Government Appropriation of the Artillery for the Defense of the Factory—Celebration in Tepic of the taking of La Puebla—Military Parade on the occasion. March 26th, 1856—General Review and Parade also the next Day—Thoughts as to them—Relations of Peones to Citizens—Their Slave-like appearance—Pittances paid to the Clergy—Market-time—Reason thereof—Provisions—Fruits—Prices of the same.

AMIGO MIO:—In consequence of the incarceration of Señor Collier, and his being under the strictest surveillance of Mexican military discipline, the cotton factory, and even the whole establishment including, was suspended by Señor Allsopp's discharging, on the morning of Señor Collier's arrest, all the operatives long inured to look there for daily meat and bread.

This to the poor Mexican operatives, who had then no other means of subsistence, from their long continuation in this employment, was most truly the reception of a shock, not anticipated to rebound so *forcibly* and *eloquently!*

I was present at this scene; having arisen quite early for this country, I arrived there from town shortly after sunrise. Suspicion was entertained by the Castaños' party, that one of the conspirators was working at the factory, and one, as reported, quite forward in the design to overthrow the ruling power in Tepic. Taking the report as true, a

body of city guards, numbering fifty, all armed for the occasion with bayoneted carbines, came out to the factory under the head of the Captain of the city police, with *full power to arrest* even *one man, if found.* It was now near ten o'clock, and breakfast hour with a part of the family; for Señors Collier and Hale had departed before this for Tepic. The head machinist, the brother of the Superintendent, boarding in his family for the society they might be to each other, was present with me at the table when these guards arrived, and the Captain placed a ragged, lousy, and sneaking Indian soldier at every avenue, entrance, and place to exercise more watchfulness. The first announcement we had of it was the sound of arms, as the horsemen redoubled their speed, to gain their respective positions. A soldier was stationed near the gate of Señor Collier's residence, ready to dispute the departure of any one wishing to go to the factory or the garden. I never before saw Mexican soldiers actively engaged to carry out an object; and I must confess, they bear in their countenances, the inviable marks and signs of a picturesque grimness, which death, in its last gaspings, would blush to imitate.

Having made a most diligent search, during two hours, to discover the whereabouts of the person suspected of conspiracy, they concluded to desist; though not without taking from the factory all the artillery, which the firm of Barron & Forbes had purchased for the defence of their property. The whole establishment was then completely dismantled, and stood, in a country beautiful by nature, a model of bold and grand conception, yet now a stature, helpless and forsaken, at the mercy of the marauding ladrones who lurk about the city of Tepic, like vultures about the mountain flocks, in almost endless numbers, to sack and demolish where their caprice or avarice may mark out a fertile spot for their fiendish actions. The artillery of Barron & Forbes,

the trophies of the occasion, were borne into town triumphantly, by the same shabby looking soldiers who had constituted the brave *force* in the seizure and confiscation of this private property, that which, in a country like this, forms the rampart, the bulwark in defence of invaded personal rights!

I must not omit to mention that, nearly at the close of the month of March last, 1856, news of a brilliant character arrived in Tepic, to the effect that the army under General Comonfort had, but a short time previous to this, taken la Puebla, situated between the city Mexico and the port of Vera Cruz on the Gulf of Mexico, and noted in Bullock's time for being the hot-bed of Catholic priests. Near the north-east part of the city of Tepic, being close by the dry creek alluded to in my topographical letter respecting its site, several of the city ordnance were hauled out from their strong holds by virile force and soldier-like drudgery, to report the sad intelligence to some, and to others, the joyful news, of the victory won by the liberalists under Comonfort, at la Puebla, over the self-conceited ramparts of his most inveterate enemies. In the accomplishment of this victory, several *padres*, in the midst of their hosts and legions, (though not of yore,) unfurling and carrying aloft the banners of their Apostolic faith, and shouting aloud for victory, lost their most holy lives; for, in this struggle for the resurrection of man's primitive rights, the whole Mexican clergy have wielded a most gigantic power and influence to effect its ultimate overthrow and oblivion, and reinstate, in the twilight of departing sun-shine, papal darkness and tyranny! Hence, night may again overshadow the fair and beautiful plains of Anahuac!

Many of the private, and all the public buildings in the city were illuminated;—bonfires were constructed; and the public square was more cared for than usual, being well lit

up and promenaded by the gay, the intelligent and the retiring ;—and also, by that *fearful mixture* which rises like a slow cancer, on the body politic, absorbing the life-blood of progress and improvement. I noticed that many of them hung their heads in mournful silence, thinking that misrule and priestcraft had arrived at the goal of their corruption, where, in connection with the general progress of events, a descent and reformation must be contested by the sword.

The next day, the commanding officers at Tepic, summoned the military force to assemble at la plaza de armas, with the purpose of preparing for a review, and afterwards, march about the city in general parade.

For Indian troops—I know no other epithets to distinguish them by—they obeyed the word of command with ease and promptness; passing through the simple evolutions of Mexican tactics in a manner indicative of aptness, skill, and willingness. A more motley, a more heterogeneous mass, and a more God-forsaken set of human forms, of almost every shade of color, I never before saw than this simple hearted, yet ferocious band of Mexican patriots, if I mistake not the application of this term, marching and countermarching near la Fonda de Oro,—on the balcony of which I took my position, to observe the timed maneuvers of Mexican soldiery.

When they had passed and got far beyond the reach of sight, I took my seat by the side of a large column, and throwing my feet on the balustrade, I sat musing in my own mind ;—how easy it was for a man of the least adaptability and shrewdness in the study of human nature, to mould those plastic forms to his designing will!

Many times, I have felt much amused to observe the relation of the country people to those in town, and the mode of paying homage to the shrine of their God. Most of

these people are *peones*, or mere laborers for the wealthier classes owning the land and living in the town; and not uncommonly, the fee-simple of the land is invested in the clergy, to whom these peones pay a small rent. Though they are said to be free, and boast of their freedom, yet in every expression to which we can apply epithets of the English language, they would appear to be slaves in the discharge of those offices peculiar to such in the bands of an organized community, adopting the principles in the relationship of bondsmen.

The period usually adopted for Mexican peones being in market, to dispose of their produce and manufactures of various kinds, I have noticed, is Sunday morning, which, it would be reasonable to suppose, is not wholly objectionable on the part of the pious and good clergy, who are then sure to get a small pittance bestowed on them, in the way of forgiving the sins of these poor market-men. For like many good and holy Christians, they most devoutly believe that these padres, clad in the sacred gown of the church, yet the most intriguing and stealthy politicians in the whole Republic of Mexico, have, by divine inspiration, the power of forgiving sins as often as they are committed; provided, a sacred donation is offered in atonement. This really looks as if God, in his infinite wisdom and goodness, was in the habit of visiting the earth in some visional form after having pronounced it "good—yea, very good," and receiving gold from man, as if he did not own the whole creation! There might be a political as well as politic question propounded with regard to where this gold has, for ages, been deposited; perhaps, though, it is securely safe in the hidden coffers of His most pious Vicegerents!

The reason of Sunday morning being the time chosen for marketing in most Mexican towns, struck me that it is

a fashionable policy got up by the clergy, to make themselves sure of obtaining these petty market gains. When, if the time were set for any other day, the leaching and absorbing coffers of the church might not be so piously respected, nor so conveniently open to receive the golden toils of fair Anahuac.

In Tepic, over the surface of the Plaza, bordering the promenades, these country market-men have their several productions spread on mats made of a species of Tulé, near which they sit, either on a stool or on mother earth, seemingly indifferent as to their sitting posture, and staring at the passers-by with a longing and solicitous look, as if to wheedle and enchain them to the spot till they had despoiled them of their purses for *holy purposes*. It is not uncommon to see market-women also dispersed among the market-men, to season the occasion with their harmonious drollery.

Beans, Chili pepper, onions, garlic, corn, Irish potatos, sweet potatos, lettuce, pumpkins, squashes, turnips, tomatos, eggs, fowls of various kinds, young pigs, lambs, calves, fresh beef and pork, and fruits of various kinds, such as limes, oranges, plantains, bananas, and several species of the custard apple, and also chairs and earthen ware made in the country, including some foreign merchandise, abound in this market, and receive their respective spots, as I have before mentioned in this letter. The prices for most of these articles range nearly on a parallel with the prices in most parts of the United States for the same or similar ones.

Among the several species of tropical fruits, I noticed the custard apple, which is most delicious; it is cone shaped, twice the size of a goose egg, of a yellowish pulp, sweet and fragrant. I was told, when traveling within the tropical regions of Mexico, and on low altitudes, that any of the species of custard apple would prove injurious to a for-

eigner just having come into the country, causing him to incur constipation, and then fever, common to such regions.

Adios,

Señor,

AGRICOLA.

CINCINNATUS.

LETTER XXXI.

Distance to Colima from Tepic—Trail—Rich Soil—Ladrones—Ranchos y Haciendas—Productions—Forest Trees and Vines.

AMIGO MIO:—Ere I have taken leave of this region, carrying you in mind further from home, my pen will accompany you on a short jaunt in a south-easterly direction towards Colima, from the city of Tepic, distant about seventy leagues. The only manner of traveling through this portion of country, either on business or to explore its fertile plains of small extent, its rolling hills, its jagged shapes of lengthened ridges, and its mountainous peaks, and record them upon the notes of time, is by trail, where mules tread in single and careful file, and that too, lonely and dangerous. This trail is not much traveled; commerce through this part having a few links to bind, and but little to receive, and still less to impart. In any other country, some attention would have been paid ere this to have unbosomed such a vast, rich and tropical region, now comparatively buried in the decomposition of its own mouldering vegetation.

With this natural view in mind as to this part, where tropical growth abounds in such a high state of perfection, it is a wonder that the fecundity of the earth is not furrowed by the plow, and made to receive those generous seeds, the productions of which are now most exclusively import-

ed, and that, too, for immediate home consumption; as cotton, for the manufacture of clothing.

The serious apprehension of danger, with respect to traveling through the Jalisco and Colima territories, proceeding from the scattered bands of ladrones, so commonly infesting every district, with the hope of stealthy gains, the loneliness of the trail, the rugged points and deep ravines, all conspire to drift the travel a circuitous route of near four hundred miles, by the way of Guadalajara, Zapotlan, and thence to Colima. Mexicans take this long route, and advise foreigners to do the same, seemingly not desirous of having their country explored by mind, nor capacity to judge; or so supinely and intolerably inclined to inactivity, that they really conclude others have no more locomotion than themselves.

Being anxious to travel farther into the interior, and make a circuit by the way of Guadalajara and Manzanillo, I preferred the most traveled route, for the purpose of gaining more general information, though not chosen so much for safety; for among the lower classes, consisting mostly of Indians and their compounds, I consider that there is little difference in any portion of the Republic, with reference to their natural thieving propensities being manifested or suppressed, as opportunity or policy might indicate.

The intervening tract of country, both directly and indirectly between Tepic and Colima, is divided into ranchos, or haciendas, owned by the clergy and a few private individuals; though a small portion of this domain is yet public, and invested in the Mexican government, subject to grant. The proprietors live in towns and cities, not far distant, and farm out many small fertile tracts, in their large possessions, for a low rent, taken in produce or in money. Here the tenants at will are under the special control of

the proprietors, and are subject to a removal when they have taken their first sown or planted produce off. But tenants for years are more independent, and plant and sow what they please, and are, in proportion to the amount of labor expended, remarkably prosperous; and they, like tenants for a term of years, not only plant annual seeds and growths, but they set out plants and trees, which take much time for them to arrive at maturity. A reasonable time, and a reasonable recompense are, by the rules of the civil law, and customs of policy, guaranteed to such occupants; though seldom, I have heard of litigation arising from the inattention of the proprietors to collect their rental dues, and though the tenants had been years in peaceable possession.

This information touching a region of country over which foreigners have seldom or never trod, was obtained by conversing with an intelligent Mexican, who had traveled it over many times, and who seemed to be well acquainted with its general figure and productions. *La vista general de esta pais* presents in an eminent degree the natural similitudes which I have already alluded to; and the productions are on a small scale, consisting of such vegetables and fruits as were previously mentioned in the market at Tepic.

The agricultural growths are limited, and consist of sugar and cotton; the forests abound in valuable dye-wood, and furnish fine finishing and cabinet lumber for home use and exportation, along the coast and in the interior, in proximity to the sea ports of San Blas and Manzanillo. This branch of industry is represented as rewarding amply those who immerge into the wilds of forest shades, and bring their work to light. On the coast between these two ports, no stream of *moment* flows into the ocean, yet I was told that there were some small inlets or coves where

smuggling is not unfrequently pursued. Yet this part abounds to a great extent with indigenous palm trees, out of which the well known palm oil is manufactured; which subject I will more fully remark upon when I shall have journied with you on my circuit to Manzanillo, where these trees flourish in great perfection and exuberance, extending over millions of acres, contiguous to the coast.

Sarsaparilla is another natural production *incidental* to this region, in which these forests abound most plentifully; and which, of late years, has been of growing importance to commerce, and noted in the medicinal vocabulary for its soothing and remedial properties, even in cases of severe *pulmonary* complaints. This plant I shall allude to again when at Colima.

Adios,

Señor,

AGRICOLA.

CINCINNATUS.

LETTER XXXII.

Thought of leaving Tepic for Guadalajara—Rich surrounding Country—The Aspect and Productions near Tepic—Distance—Departure at 11 o'clock at night, in the Stage—Previous Precaution—Señor Augsburgh and Family—Thick Fog—Scenery—Agriculture—First Station, its Aspect—Second Station, its Peculiarities and Buildings.

AMIGO MIO:—Being still at Tepic, and having observed much with reference to a region of country which may, from its uniqueness and picturesque scenery in rich and beautiful vallies and mountain landscapes, strike you favorably, (though I trust not wholly so) and hold forth inducements to fearless and hardy adventurers, I shall now wave any further details of this part of fair Anahuac, till I conclude these letters, when it will be my intention to briefly recapitulate my ground; touching and investigating the historic, civil and scientific field lying on the western slope of *esta Cordillera.*

Notwithstanding the novelty and information arising from travel in this strange and often distracted country by intestine commotions—the result of revolutionists and ladrones, and that too, in the richest and most cultivated portions—I must confess that I have often felt an inward reluctance to set out again renewing my explorations and encountering anticipated dangers, especially after having enjoyed a fine climate and the luxurious comforts embraced in some of the beautiful cities of western Mexico. Here the aroma,

rich in nature's crystal urns, arising from mountain flowers, plants and trees; also from the fields of coffee trees, sugar cane, plantains, bananas, cotton and maize, conspiring to make fragrant the scene, I inhaled with a grateful sensation in thanks fully and feelingly expressed to the Great Cause, for these many peculiar and useful bestowments upon man.

These incidents though small, include much; and I mention them to show the peculiar adaptations of this region, and how grateful man should feel to be assigned this, his happy and bountiful lot here below—comparing it with the frosts of Lapland or the bleak winds of Greenland's icy fields. Here the fertile field is sown and harvested, or nature, in her prolific and seed-bearing bosom, plants the desired spot, and man lifts his eyes and plucks the fruit; but there nature seems shrouded in the forbidding aspect of her own dreary solitudes;—hence her vegetation is unmatured for man, and her supplies are small at best, and her sons and daughters have to seek a loathsome and precarious subsistence.

My mind being made up to leave the city of Tepic for that of Guadalajara, near two hundred miles in the interior, I had learned that I could avail myself of traveling in company with Señor Augsburgh and family, the French Consul for these cities, or rather the whole State of Jalisco, who had hired the stage on this occasion for his own use, but without filling all the seats, I embraced it readily, having previously heard too much of the dangers of the way to venture compatively with Mexicans alone, or without company well prepared to meet incidental emergencies. The necessary arrangements for this tedious journey having been effected, and taking a final farewell of my friends and acquaintances of recent date, I took myself to rest till the hour of eleven o'clock had nearly arrived. This is the

Mexican set hour for leaving cities by stage, which we almost instinctively obeyed, yet with dismal forebodings as to our personal safety; wending our devious way over the stony streets, which seemed to jar the very construction of the coach; the mules six in number being on a full bound. Señor Augsburgh, I soon discovered, possessed in a high degree those peculiar Germanic characteristics, which, rather slow in being moulded to acquaintanceship, yet when knowingly tapped were warm, cordial, congenial and instructive. He is a German merchant of wealth and high respectability, and has lived in the Republic of Mexico ten or more years, following commercial pursuits in both Tepic and Guadalajara. Not many years since, he became *engrafted* to a Mexican lady of an intelligent aspect and cordial heart, in the city of Tepic, where she loves to go occasionally to see her relations and attend to her patrimony. Thus Señor Augsburgh resides alternately in either city, though prompted by motives to perpetuate the health of his family, he prefers *la tierra templada* surrounding the city of Guadalajara to *la tierra calienta á cercá*, Tepic; hence he resides mostly in the former, and at a country villa a few miles out of the city.

In departing from Tepic we were all cautious to be well armed, having in and on the coach one hundred rounds of ball, in a species of artillery which would have been fearlessly aimed and discharged had there been any necessity in an attempt to the application of them.

The early part of the night was of a bright star-light; and the city of Tepic with her dusky sentinels patroling the streets, and every half hour exclaiming to the full height of their rough voices, "*Bien es todas, la ciudad Dios consecre*," as the occasion seemed to require, forcibly reminded me that, though I might be among the sleeping tombs of the dead, yet there were a few wakeful passen-

gers who had not gone on their dark or sunny way, weeping or rejoicing. Near midnight a thick fog had spread its misty mantle over this fragrant region, shedding almost a cool and gentle shower for a time, even penetrating my *serapé*, and falling from my eye-lashes and face in bountiful and crystal-like drops. This at first greatly bedimmed my sight and the extent of my visional observations; though I discovered that it was nearly a level, or a gently undulating surface we were passing over. In fact the general aspect of this region so far as my eye could extend through the dim mist, till our arrival at the first station, presented of varied beauty, a scenery teeming with *cots*, trees, and a substantial enclosure along the road for many a mile, encompassed with heavy and high stone walls on either side.

It was in the month of April I passed, and near the road in this spacious field at either view, I saw bands of mules, horses, cattle, sheep, goats and hogs herding promiscuously. Observing this enclosure, and that nothing had been planted in it, as the time for planting in the temperate zone had just begun or was drawing to a close, especially in the south of the United States, I was naturally led to enquire why this was not plowed for planting? I was responded to intelligently, that the Mexicans never forced a bountiful supply, and scarcely made use of the regular planting seasons as they approached. Moreover, I was informed that the rainy season would set in during the latter part of May or the first of June, and then after the crude manner of Mexican agriculture, this vast enclosure would perhaps be planted with cotton; rice; maize, the staff of the Mexicans; pumpkins; squashes; and a full variety of Mexican plants and vegetables susceptible of maturing within the season required for the aforesaid specific productions. In most of the fertile portions of Anahuac, on the western slope of the Cordillera, the dry season contin-

ues too long for the husbandmen to successfully grow many of the *long-seasoned* staples; such as coffee, cotton, sugar-cane, and rice, without having at their will the most ample means of irrigation; though, would the Mexican agriculturists and gentlemen of means adopt the system of Artesian *well boring* so extensively pursued by the Americans in the State of California, particularly in the valley of San José, they might live in a country abounding in perennial verdure and bloom.

The drive to the first station, being la Hacienda de Trigomel, took but a short time, the distance being ten miles only from the city, and the mules let go at the height of their speed. Having arrived, I immediately descended from my seat on the top of the coach, where in traveling through Mexican States I have usually chosen to sit, in order to be on the alert for coming danger; and having straightened myself for a moment, and taking a quick glance at the premises around the station, I discovered that there were only a few Indian huts or cots in proximity with *la casa de el Superintendente*,—the proprietor of the soil living in the city.

In a few moments we were all ready *por paseando*, as it takes the Mexican hostlers a short time only at the stations, to regulate their relays, and be in readiness to meet the anticipations of the most *fastidious* and go-ahead traveller. The same aspect near the road and at a distance, with rolling hills and mountain peaks, presented itself to the traveler's thoughtful vision, as had in arriving at the first station; though of the two, this appeared most broken on approaching the second station, twenty-one miles from the city, which is called la Hacienda de Labor. The fog had now nearly lost itself in the constant absorption of earth's unslaking thirst; and the night, having been more than half spent in a dreary and watery shroud, was then resum-

ing its silvery gems to light up awhile, and delight us with the scenery around, and which we were about to pass through. Near this station I saw a large and well conducted *Hacienda* dwelling, which, *en la vista general,* more resembles some antique castle with its cots and dilapidated outbuildings, of which we have often read in descriptions of European fortresses in times of yore, than any order of architecture of a more modern date. It stood alone upon a slight elevation, almost solitary, and truly with nothing companionable about, occupying an area of two thousand four hundred feet, and being two stories high, and also *ornamented* with heavy columns, arches, balconies, balustrades, large and heavy doors and iron gratings for windows, and having a wall three feet thick with a terraced roof and a parapet near three feet high above its surface.

Being wearied of wielding the pen for the present, and feeling a desire to open a new account with you; though following the same descriptive thread, and to relax from care; I presume that this motion you will not waive, since it emanates from so generous yet *thoughtful a friend.*

Adios,

Señor,

AGRICOLA.

CINCINNATUS.

LETTER XXXIII.

Population of La Labor—Indian Character—Traveling Speed—Hacienda de San Leonel—Aspect—Soil—Productions—El Rancho de Mirador—Its Population—Rancho de Galindo—Scenery—Springs—Rancho de Lagunilla, and that of San Ysabel—Occupation, and Stock—Milk.

AMIGO MIO:—Again for your amusement and hypothetical instruction, I resume my pen in transmitting such portions of my travels in Mexico as I hope will interest you most. In this view I will lead your thoughtful humor to the concluding part of my last letter at the second station, *la Hacienda de la Labor.* The population at *esta hacienda* is about six hundred, consisting, for the most part, of laboring Indians, who like the southern slaves obey the voice of their master; and that too, in a far more humble form of outward acts of servility. Though Mexico boasts of the freedom of her sons and daughters, yet most of them serve under a *yoke* of bondage, with a clear conception of its character, and an evident conviction of its consequences; I mean that of ignorance the most willful, and tyranny, its natural sequence. If the Mexican servant desires any information or other object of the proprietor or of a superior, or has to enter his house to see him on business, he puts his hat under his arm as if by natural impulse, and retains it there till he has left the immediate presence of his lord. The relation in which these *peones* stand to those

who give them employment, I have already mentioned in a preceding letter, as being below that of a southern slave; and without the obligations of a master's care and purse, in case of sickness and the trembling infirmities of age. The proprietor of *esta hacienda*, with his family, resides here most of the time, and he is engaged in the production of maize, frijoles or beans, and sugar cane, with such vegetables as the market and the Indians may require for sustenance; and also, in the growth of stock. I was also informed that he had been many times attacked by the stealthy bands *de banditos*, who prowl about on the fertile plains, yet as often he had forced them to retreat from his stronghold, repelling them by the gentle, still manly persuasion of arms.

The rate of our traveling, I should imagine, would range about six miles an hour, and on an average, we must have received fresh relays every ten miles' travel; the number of traveling hours being thirty, and on the road thirty-six in all, between Tepic and Guadalajara. Many parts of this route we found rough, precipitous and stony, which much retarded the speed of the mules. In a geographical line, the distance is not so far; the main road being circular to avoid the passing through deep gulches and over mountainous districts.

Having anticipated the speed of our traveling, the distance of the journey, and somewhat of the character of the road, I will now accompany you, amigo mio, to my resuming more fully my departure at the second station. Every one and everything being properly adjusted, we sallied out on a bounding trot at two o'clock in the morning; the stars shining brightly, and the milky-way being in the zenith of its splendor, serving us not as the "pillar of light" in days of yore, to the nomadic tribes of Israelites, in the full execution of *ancient* prediction; but as a gentle hand-

maid with many pleasing characteristics, to light us on our way, and aid in making observations upon the beauties or deformities of nature or of the surrounding and passing objects. 'Ere we had gone far in tracing the happy landscape of nature, and launched out into the full contemplation of what we may have heard or were then seeing, our vision was again rescued from too much intensity by our passing *la Hacienda San Leonel*, three miles from the former. *Esta Hacienda* apeared to be surrounded with similar building improvements, and pursuits, and with a population of near nine hundred, most of whom would fully characterize the *peones* in habits or general appearance, especially in the peculiarites of ignorance, stupidity and slothfulness.

This region appears well watered, abounding in building and fencing stones and rocks, yet with a scarce supply of forest trees for any purposes, except fuel. The land is productive, even during the dry season, when properly irrigated; and in abundance within the gulches and *cañadas* you would see, as passing along, the yellow harvest of the plantains and bananas, ready to be plucked and eaten! The soil here, and in fact through most of this region of country, is volcanic, presenting those ingredients so generally commingling with its nature, silex alumina, lime, potash and iron; and these, in some portions, were decomposed, having united with their particles vegetable mould, and in others they were decomposing; trap rocks occurring in large tabular masses, rising one above another, like steps. In other portions of the same region of country, you may cast your eye and behold it capt with the rock of ages, granite, with its apparent compositions, quartz, feldspar and mica; while the soil in other parts possesses a substratum of argillaceous deposit, with an overlayer of calcareo-argillaceous and loamy contexture,—presenting upon its sur-

face, an infinite luxuriance of vegetation. This kind of soil, it is my impression, in regions where tropical rains prevail with so much violence, might be more lasting, as it would not admit of too free a drainage, but retain mostly the rich decomposition of vegetable growth.

A variety of elevations now became more conspicuous; and lofty peaks near at hand and in the distance changed the scene, showing on their whitened or brownish sides, the grandeur of magnificence; while *el camino de coche* winds around the base of many a hoary sire, then down a gulch furrowed out by the mountain torrents, and thence along a sloping plain, jagged in form, till it *struck* a beautiful level; where bounding, we passed on our wayward course. In the lapse of an hour from the last station, we had arrived at *el rancho del Mirador*, twenty-seven miles from the city of Tepic, surrounded by poor huts to mark the existence of human tenements. The population is near one hundred, consisting mostly of Indians; and the pursuits for a subsistence are grazing on a small scale, and the cultivation *de frijoles, ajos, cebóllas miez y pimento de chile*, including fruits, melons, and the like. These are the kinds of productions which tend much to support the lower classes in Mexico, and enter largely into that of the higher. The next habitation we hailed is that of *el rancho de Galindo*, thirty miles from Tepic; here I noticed a similar population to what I have already described, consisting of one hundred, and mostly Indians, with pursuits of a similar character to those above mentioned.

The country had now become more than undulating; it was rather rough, and in many places mountain peaks were presenting themselves near *el camino*, lending romance to us lonely sojourners, peeping one above another in quick succession, and seemingly floating along in *ethereal* mist.

We saw not *las establecimientos de el rancho*, where we

were to receive relay mules, near the road, as we had ascended quite a hill; but near a forest tree we beheld the mules harnessed and ready for immediate service, with an hostler on the alert to perform his required duty. Afterwards, in passing along, we saw the buildings in the gulch below, which spread out into a rich bottom land, where the usual productions peculiar to a climate bordering on the temperate zone, as the result of altitude, were grown in perfection and abundance. The reason that many *rancho* and *hacienda* buildings, are not situated on the road, is that springs of water cannot always be conveniently had for household and *rancho* purposes.

Our relay of mules being all ready for the sounding thong, we soon took leave of this lonely spot, which to me, having come from the whirl of a California life, seemed so desolate; and we passed on, meeting with a few changes, such as seeing clumps of scrubby oaks, white, red, and black, that were fitted for no other design than that of fuel.

Nothing of moment met our eyes to whet up our observations and make us chronicle events, till our arrival at *el rancho del Ocotillo*, forty-two miles from the city of Tepic. *Esto rancho* consists of a population of nearly two hundred Indians, who are engaged in its cultivation. Receiving our relay of mules we traveled on, seemingly without the note of time, passing *el rancho de Lagunilla* in the distance of three miles, with a population of mostly mixed breeds, numbering two hundred; and in that of three miles further, that of San *Ysabel*, forty-eight miles from Tepic. The population here is varied and numbers about six hundred; although Shem's apparent race is quite visible in the general contour of their facial regions. The chief objects of occupation and pursuit are very similar with those I have already mentioned. Small tracts or patches are here and there cultivated on each of these, in the usual

Mexican manner of tilling land, coupled with grazing. The stock consists of cattle, horses, mules, sheep, goats and hogs; though I did not discover that any of these abounded superabundantly in any of this region of country.

Estos ranchos are remarkably well watered, the water rising from the mountain solitudes and springs on the syphonic principle. Feeling that the length of this letter may weary you and encumber myself with too much writing at one time, I will close this and renew my journey in another letter.

Adios,

Señor,

AGRICOLA.

CINCINNATUS.

LETTER XXXIV.

Hacienda de Tetitan—Aspect—Productions—Rancho de Vreto—Breakfast thereat and its Kind—Its aspect—Humid Lands—Manners and Customs of the Indians generally—Mode of Living—Amusements—Chapels on Haciendas—Moral Information gained under the influence of Religion—State Religion, impolitic.

AMIGO MIO:—One soon becomes really fatigued in thus traveling half of the night or more; especially, *como no hay minguna fonda*, where we could have obtained, early in the morning, a cup of coffee or chocolate to gratify our longing appetites. All ready, we took leave of *el Rancho de San Ysabel*, and in traveling six miles we reached the large and beautiful *Hacienda de Tetitan*, which is possessed of very good improvements and of a population of twelve hundred, eleven-twelfths of whom are Indians, serving in the capacity of peones. This is surrounded with stock of various kinds, sufficient for practical purposes. The productions at this place are the same as those which I have already mentioned as being grown at Haciendas.

However, I must not omit mentioning, that prior to our leaving San Ysabel we purchased some milk of a Señora, whom we saw milking, on our arrival to receive our relay of mules. Señor Augsburgh having traveled the road several times, and well understanding the requisites for personal comfort on a long jaunt, had laid in a bountiful supply of cooked provisions which he now shared with the other passengers most liberally, and for this act of attention, I

here beg to acknowledge the most welcome reception of on my own part.

The hours of breakfasting when traveling in this country, either in the stage or otherwise, is at ten o'clock. A. M., and this morning, more than usual for myself, I felt a keen appetite, having traveled since eleven o'clock the night before till the present, about nine o'clock.

The next place in succession on my journal is *el Rancho de Vreto*, sixty miles from Tepic, and where if I mistake not, we received our relay with a most cordial good cheer; for in receiving this, we also received *el almuerzo de nosotros de rancho*. Our rancho breakfast was at rather a mean looking hut; consisting of two front rooms on the ground, of adobe construction, of a thatched roof, and of not a few bushes in front of la casa, to serve in the grateful capacity of a covered piazza.

Having dismounted from our seats, we soon saw our hostess busily engaged in *anatomical dissections* of fowls, beef, and other eatables, which she had been, and was having cooked in a most hurried manner. We hailed it as a luxury after a wearisome jaunt of sixty miles, to halt even at a hut, wash our dusty faces, and comb our hair; though without the convenience or rather refinement of a toilette glass to peep into, in order to straighten our locks and deck our brows in proportions just, like some blithsome sylphs. This over, we cast our eyes about for a lounge to rest our limbs for a few moments, and saw dry ox hides strewed over the ground flowers under the bush piazza roof, and on these there were soon spread blankets where we severally threw ourselves till the *unwonted call* for breakfast rang coarsely through our ears. The time had now arrived for this call, and to me at this hour of the day, it seemed an unnatural one, yet almost instinctively I obeyed its dictation and arising, not from my downy bed, I went to the

breakfast-board in quite a small room, so much so that we could scarcely pass each other to be seated.

This did not look superabundantly supplied, nor as if the fields and gardens had been robbed of much of their golden fruits; still there was a sufficiency to eat and satisfy our hunger, consisting of coffee with milk, chocolate, beef-steak roasted on coals, eggs boiled, bread, *tortillas, frijolas, y carné con Chili colorado;* and after this, as it is the custom of the country, we were presented with paper cigars, called *cigaritos*, of which I soon discovered that all persons without regard to sex enjoyed the luxury, except the first class of young ladies; and this if they do, they indulge in secretly, as an exhilarant custom.

Breakfast being over, and feeling myself much refreshed, I took a stroll out to behold the liones de el rancho, but I discerned them not. I contented myself with observing its beautiful location in a fertile district of country, adapted to grazing or agricultural pursuits, with a fine mountain stream running through it, sufficient to fertilize the parched earth, and make it most productive at any season of the year. The population is estimated at two hundred, and I should imagine that nineteen-twentieths of it were of Indian progenitors, and these mostly serve as peones. The productions are the same as at *otros ranchos*, though limited I assure you, amigo, in comparison to what they might be made by the hand of industry and well directed labor. The hills and mountains were dry and seemed to afford, in the month of April, a scanty supply of verdure to maintain animal existence, except in low and humid lands. These abound between mountainous ridges and spurs towering into the misty clouds; and in the dry season they resemble *oases* in the desert land of the Great Sahara. There, as at the other localities where we passed, the spirit, the manners, the customs, and knowledge of the country people or Indian

peones, or *paisanos de Indianos*, are very much the same; which I will now allude to, for the purpose of no other object than to represent verified characteristics as they fell under my observation, in passing through this and other regions of Western Mexico.

But little of a commendable spirit did I see in the general improvements of the country to render the habitations of man the *greatest* desiderata, yet a personal spirit of revenge and hatred did I frequently witness this class extend to each other. In their habits they are extremely lazy, prone to misrepresentations, filthy, hair long and knotted, faces dirty, bare-footed, and often bare-headed, with a loose pair of pantaloons, shirt, and sometimes a round-about, and with a blanket they are sometimes blest as comprising a portion of a wardrobe. Frequently *en paseando los ranchos y haciendas*, I beheld them extended on the ground, and many times under an imperfect shade, very dissimilar to that *humanity* which I had been wont to see in other lands. By the extreme force of hunger, and the remonstrance and persuasion of the proprietors of these establishments, are these Indian peones urged and brought into the performance of manual labor, to obtain a mere sustainment; though this requirement of nature they would not obey, were there ample opportunities of stealing, robbing and escape, blended together. I saw many of them on horse-back, tilting about the plains with ease and gracefulness in their motions; keeping their bodies in a flexible position with the gallop of their steeds.

The dresses of the females, like the clothes of the males, are made of cheap calico of the most flashy print for the skirts, with scarcely any notions of propriety or decency about them. This fashion, if it deserves a comparison, looked like that of the antique ages of the world, perhaps shortly after the creation; when human beings discerned

their nudity; for in adapting them to their dusky frames they gave their dresses ample measurement to admit the cool air to freely circulate; and seldom, was I informed, they wore any underclothes: perhaps a chemise without any addition. Their dresses, though made with skirts and sometimes sleeves, are seldom raised to a comely position, merely *lashed* around their waists. Over their heads and shoulders they usually wear *los rebozos* or long shawls, mostly knit of cotton thread, dyed with varied hues. These shawls or *rebozos* they extend gracefully over their heads, supplying the custom of wearing bonnets, and fully protecting their oval, brawny forms to the lower part of the waist. This class of female *peones*, doing what they may in the form of domestic employment, ever retain *sus rebozos*, seldom using pins as in other countries. These Indians generally sleep on the ground floor of their huts, having dried ox hides beneath, and in this manner they pass long nights enfolded in their blankets, rehearsing ancestral achievements, and the feats in which they themselves have been engaged, till natnre exhausted, closes their eyes in the oblivion of night. Their diet is simple, consisting of *carné con Chili colorado*, *tortillos*, sweet potatoes, bread made of a plant called jatrophia, fruits common to the country, *ajos*, *cebóllas*, without coffee or tea; however, cold water is commonly substituted. The chief amusement of this class consist in cock-fighting, bull-fighting, running horses on the plains, throwing the lasso when on a full gallop with unerring certainty, and fandangos accompanied and enlivened with violins and guitars, and also tamborines, and sometimes with jolly vocal music, and generally ending in a fight, with one or two deaths to pay a small *tribute to pleasure*.

On most of las Haciendas there is a chapel where the hacienda peones, with the country people on *los ranchos*

near at hand attend church of a Sunday morning, kneeling and ejaculating a short prayer in imitation of the sainted padré who has, perhaps, come from a distant city or some humble village, to bless his flock in sowing good and righteous seeds, but with godly and pious care to reap his *harvest* ere the setting sun had shut in his *golden fleece*. With all the pious care and instruction; with all the external forms of ceremony and godly invocation; christianed under the holy banners of the faith, and surrounded by godly fathers; taught to kneel before the altar and the Saints, and repeat in chorus loud, sacred anthems, attuned by the instrumental choir; adoring one set of men as mediators between an offended God and offending man, and paying these tribute to plead their cause and express their eloquence to the admiring crowd; it would, most assuredly, beggar truth to give the red men of the forest a higher position, either mentally, physically, morally, politically, artistically, or scientifically, than their ancestors possessed at the time of the conquest of Mexico, under the iron sway of Montezuma.

Hence the amount of moral, artistic and scientific information of which one would observe these Indians to be in possession, has been far excelled by a long line of ancestral births, if we can credit astute pages of history, which, in bold relief, reflect the manners, habits, customs, arts and sciences of the *ancient* and sagacious Aztecs.

In these remarks I do not intend to advocate but that religion *in a State is necessary* to its moral preservation and advancement; though this religion should advocate as little for *self* as possible, that it may inculcate moral duties efficaciously; but *that of a State* the past history of the world forbids; as all the elements, whether good or bad in such a State, are concentrated in a few, and become locked up under a preconcerted seal, the stamp of which would

paralyze the soul of any commonwealth. Nor should the whole of a religious school or sect be condemned because of the tendency of its bad principles or advocates, except so far as they may impose themselves upon the political affairs of a State; nor should we question but that under all forms of religion there must be some good and truly pious souls; though perhaps, all mankind may bear watching to keep them good.

Feeling that I have partially discharged the object I had in the design of this letter, I will waive any further details which might be embraced in its peculiar characteristics, and submit it to your personal and indulgent care, resuming in my next, the *even* tenor of my *way*.

Adios,

Señor,

AGRICOLA.

CINCINNATUS.

LETTER XXXV.

El Rancho de Vreto—Scenery—Trees—Volcanic Remains—Rancho de Marquesado—Features of the Country—Solar Heat—Mineral Aspect—La Villa de Ahuactlan Population—Scenery—Pueblo de Ceatan—Aspect—La Villa de Ystlan—Population—Country—Productions—Pious Sinner—Moistened Spots—Rancho de San José de Gracia—Mixed Breeds—Inducements—Plan de Barrancas—Description thereof—Wild Scenery—Productions—Dwellings—Terminus of the Tepic Stage Road—Hotel.

AMIGO MIO:—At eleven o'clock, A. M., we departed from el Rancho de Vreto, feeling ourselves quite comfortable and awake for new and coming scenes. The country we were passing through, and had been, appeared much broken on the road, and in the distance, presenting numerous spurs, continuous from the sloping Cordilleras.

Scarcely any forests, shrubs, or bushes, arose on our vision to blend their verdure with life, or contrast it with decomposing scoria which line the mountain slopes in trapic forms. Volcanic remains still continued to bound the angle of vision, and their crumbling fragments serve for man to wend his way o'er plains, o'er slopes and peaks,—works of a mysterious convulsion.

The next place of note worthy of mention in the line of my travel is el Rancho de Marquesado, sixty-six miles from Tepic, with a mixed population of three hundred, mostly Indian peones, who serve in the capacity of tillers of the soil, drawers of water, and hewers of wood, and also, of herdsmen.

The sun became much hotter as his golden rays beamed on our doomed heads almost vertically, and reflected his heat from the parched objects which we were passing, instead of absorbing it as they would have done had they been verdant. The geographical constitution and features of the country appeared as usual; and I should be under the impression in comparing this region with the numerous ranges of the Cordilleras in California, particularly in the extreme northern and southern, as well as middle mines, that unknown mineral wealth must exist here in boundless profusion, and that it only wants a firmer hand, a stronger muscle, and a wiser policy, to here awaken and astound men in the discoveries of many a new El Dorado.

Continuing our journey through similar regions, at one o'clock, P. M., we hailed la Villa de Ahuacatlan, seventy-two miles from Tepic, situated in a beautiful, undulating, yet fertile district, and laid out with some notions respecting the convenience and *adaptation* of a small *town*. The population is near fifteen hundred, and well mixed with our ancestors, father Noah's proscribed races, presenting even nicer divisions of shade; and here for the first time on this road, I noticed *una fonda regulada, una iglesia*, and several stores, *ó las tiendas; tambien una plaza*, shaded with beautiful rows of orange trees in bloom; and where the mountain streams have fed, for many a setting sun, the artistic fountain, to which all come and take of the limpid water to slake their thirst, or to boil their *potage;* though I presume not such as Jacob sold unto Esau for his birth-right. Who knows but that by this act and at this time, arose in man the assumed right, the accursed precedent, tolerating primogeniture? So far as I noticed the construction of the buildings, those especially embracing the plaza,—they appeared to be one story high, and made of adobes or soft burnt bricks, and plastered inside and outside, having flat

roofs with small parapets, and court-yards in the center; some of which are ornamented with trees, tropical in their nature and fruit—bearing; and also, rills and fountains. I should be induced to think from my own personal observations that, out of the population of this village, fourteen-fifteenths of the citizens were Indians or of mixed blood.

Departing from la Villa de Ahuacatlan, we passed on over the same unique and picturesque region, though uncultivated, as before, till our arrival at el Pueblo de *Ceatan*, seventy-six miles from Tepic. Here we received a relay of mules, and soon passed on; though I had, during a momentary suspension of our travel, embraced an opportunity to learn the extent of the population, which amounted to five hundred souls, formed by singular combinations and characteristics of consanguinity. Here also, I beheld a beautiful crystal stream running through *el Pueblo*, supplying the people with an abundance of water for irrigation.

Pursuing our journey with slight changes of scenery, our coach soon reached la Villa de Ystlan, eighty-one miles from Tepic; having a population of two thousand four hundred, and fully eleven-twelfths of whom I should set down as mixed races and Indians. This town was conceived in times predominating with regular notions; the streets crossing each other mostly at right angles, though narrow, but paved with cobble stones, and also, the side walks, as it is the usual practice in Mexican towns. La plaza I saw near the center of the village, ornamented with running rills, a fountain, and fruit-bearing shade trees. Many of the houses, *ó las casas* about the square, presented a neat aspect to one passing through; being constructed in the usual Mexican style, and white-washed on both sides. On either side of la plaza, I saw a few stores, shops, and *dos Fondas publicas*, all of which betokened a considerable commerce. I was informed that there were here several public schools,

conducted, though on the principles of all public instruction in the country where the youth are taught more to imitate than penetrate, more to move the hand gracefully from head to heart, and from arm to arm, than the head into the truthful studies of arts and sciences. As yet, I beheld much the sameness with referenc to the industrial productions of the country, and the same broken aspects flitted before my view, adding now and then, notwithstanding, novelty to what I had seen. In this Villa there is *una iglesia*, where all, whether pure or spotted, go to confess their many sinful thoughts and marauding actions once a week, a month, or year at farthest in set time, and endeavor ever afterwards to live a pious and holy life. And while in church on bended knees, with one hand on the breast and the other extended toward heaven—with eyes half closed in divine imitation, and under divine inspiration, resting on the holy father and a man of fashion in the same attitude of worship, though with his delicate white handkerchief half suspended from his pocket; a pious sinner most dexteriously rids this goodly man of his superfluous appendage.

Having surveyed this city to the extent of our ability, and expressing a temporary regret that such fair spots were so little cared for by man, we continued our traveling over broken ridges, spurs of the las Cordilleras, over plains, and across brooks, and through clumps of scrubby forest trees, passing here and there moistened spots, which, in this present conjuncture of the seasons, singled themselves out to our vision, with peculiar attraction. Here animals and birds come to slake their feverish thirst, returning natural thanks to an all bountiful Provider, by a kind expression in the position of their heads and eyes, unlike the Indians at the altar, without stealing a hair or a feather, and afterwards nip the tender blades which are constantly shorn of their coming growth.

Arriving near *el Rancho do San José de Gracia*, we had but a few moments to make observations, yet these were indulged in to the best advantage, as they were extended to us by our kind coachman. The buildings we saw in a few moments were of a miserable construction, being no more than Indian huts made of most flimsy contextures, with a slight exception in the dwelling of the proprietor. The population of this rancho approximates eight hundred, who are mostly mixed breeds and Indians, and perform the labors required for the occupancy of their tenements.

Este rancho is laid down on my journal as being eighty-seven miles from Tepic. It is an old adage that "time waits for no man," and we found this invariably the case in Mexican stage traveling; for the coachmen seemed ever to be as desirous of passing rapidly through, as *expressmen* in the State of California when on missions of the greatest magnitude. Therefore we were forced to extend our visional search over this fair land most hurriedly, taking in at a glance the whole compass of the scenery; hill and dale, mound and mountain, rising and departing with a peculiar impression on the mind. Not having passed on far, we hailed another rancho called *el Rancho del Ocote*, ninety miles from Tepic; from the note on my journal, there is a heterogeneous population of near one hundred human beings, the mixed and Indian races prevailing. The cultivation, the productions, the tone—public or private—of the community, the constitutional features of the soil, of the streams and mountains, combine but slight shades of difference in passing through this portion of the country, offering to strangers at present few inducements to settle, except in Los Pueblos or the large commercial cities. While sojourning in this country, I discovered on close observation, and conversing with men of intelligence, that the great and paramount causes of settlements not having been generally

made throughout the country and kept up in a prosperous condition, are reduced to two-fold; first, large grants which divide a *large* tract of country among a few, and often these grantees are destitute of every principle and virtue, intelligence and responsibility, constituting men; and secondly, the want of will and concentration in the general *government* to suppress the devastating crime of robbing *los ranchos y las haciendas*, and to encourage the husbandmen, the mechanics and the merchants, in their several and varied pursuits; promoting and giving place at the same time to the combined effect of the arts and sciences. For if the husbandmen should plant the fertile fields off from the protection of settlements, yielding them an abundance, and gather in their promised harvests;—the very next day they might be robbed of their hard earnings ere they had tasted a morsel of their new *leaven* bread.

The next object we noticed in the line of our travel, and on this old thoroughfare, constructed by the Spaniards many years since, was the *Plan de Barrancas*, ninety-six miles from Tepic, of hard traveling over craggy, jagged and mountainous slopes. *El plan de Barrancas* signifies the first surface or the edge of deep breaks or gulches furrowed out by mountain floods. The perpendicular depth of *las Barrancas* I should set down as near two thousand feet, being two miles down by the winding of the road, which in many places appeared to be on an angle of forty-five degrees with the horizon for a very short distance; and the greater part of it would seem from close observation on an angle of thirty degrees, winding much at that. As I before remarked, it was constructed when Old Spain bore her iron rod over this fertile region of Anahuac. It is paved from the top to the bottom, with a few exceptions, by round cobble stones, and on the side of this road leading off to the precipitous abyss below, there is a substan-

tial wall of stones laid in mortar and about three feet high, which serves as an apparent barrier against threatening danger in making a careless or hurried descent. In many places it was necessary to blast the granite rocks and touch the projective points of basalt and trap, in order to clear the passage for the road, in which case it required no cobble stones for paving. As I have already observed, this road wound much, even to be at all practicable for staging or wagoning; notwithstanding, our experienced coachman let the mules, ten in number, go at a lively rate most of the way down *las barrancas*, which to me seemed to demand much dexterity in handling the reins and turning sharp angles made by excavations for the road. Volcanic rocks, scrubby oaks, and various stinted growths, alternately presented their shaggy aspects to my sight, while descending, either in front, to the right or the left. This chasm had the appearance of extending up and down on either side of the road, and that too to some distance; though meanderingly.

In the formation of the granite and basalt *en las barrancas*, I noticed layers of shale frequently intervening, which impressed in my mind an uniqueness as to their physiognomy, so far as I could judge from passing through and casting a momentary glance upon the objects before, and on either side. The bottom of *las barrancas* is near three miles wide by the way of the road, and is considerably cultivated in tropical fruits and productions, commonly grown in this part; such as the banana, plantain, pine apple, the different species of custard apple, oranges, limes, citrons, sugar cane, coffee trees and cocoanut trees, the latter of which are much grown in Mexico, especially along the sea coast, and of which as well as several other productions, it will suit my convenience and taste to mention more at large when I shall have arrived at Colima in the nar-

rative of my travels and observations through much of the western slope of the Mexican Cordillera.

There is a small stream running through this alluvial bottom, serving the *peones* or *laborers* the purpose of irrigagation and other required objects usually embraced in a small settlement. The water is clear, cool, and I should think healthful; notwithstanding the rank growth of vegetation on the margin of this brook. It was dark, or starlight when we arrived at the base of the gulch on the opposite side; having passed the small settlement known as *el plan de Barrancas, sobre el camino de* Tepic. The population here approaches four hundred, and is much mixed; though the Aztec features prevail. Here I saw few of the domestic animals adapted to the common wants of man, except hogs and goats; fruits and sweet potatoes furnishing the staff of life; and a little traffic in bananas and other fruits packed on *burros*, simply furnishing *estos peones* with colored cotton domestics and calico, and blankets for clothing and bedding. Here also, I saw a few adobe houses, and also soft burnt bricks and granite used for building materials, which I confess in this strange abyss, though not that of Pluto, indicated a domestic neatness far from being expected. The huts and the better dwellings appeared, in passing, but one story high; and the latter white-washed on both sides. The cocoa palm, the banana and orange were the chief ornaments which surrounded many of these habitations.

Here, even here, two thousand feet in the bowels of the earth, I saw a place of Divine service, a church erected whereat to mould the colored man, the red man of the forests for whom christian people, and most christian governments have entertained so much sympathy, and have even expressed it to the end of occupancy and partitions of the hunting and fishing man's grounds and ponds, and rivers,

among a new race. Where would not these sainted fathers, these holy men, go to propagate their trinitarian creeds and Jesuitical dogmas? To another planet, were the electric wire once straightened on the way!

On the opposite side *de estas barrancas*, there are two huts belonging to the stage company, where they keep their relays. At this point the road from Tepic terminates, and the same stage in which we rode till our arrival, will return the next day, leaving this station at one o'clock A. M.

The ascent on the easterly slope is quite steep and rugged, being remarkably difficult for mules to ascend with men, or even any persons mounted on them. It is a winding trail, paved most of the way with cobble stones, which prevent the tropical rains from washing, so as to make it impassable. It took a full hour to make the summit, after dark, and the family of Señor Augsburg became rather wearied, especially the smaller members of it.

La Fonda de Frances on the summit, is a hotel kept by a Frenchman; having been in the country some time, he has located here to serve himself better, though the outward object to serve the public when arriving either from Tepic or Guadalajara; this being half way, or the half way house.

Feeling that you may desire a relaxation from the perusal of these letters as I do from writing for a few hours, I will consider a good night's repose and untrammeled thought of infinite advantage to us both; beginning with the morning anew my journey and my toil.

Adios,

Señor,

AGRICOLA.

CINCINNATUS.

LETTER XXXVI.

Farther Description—Dinner—Sleep—Departure—Scenery—Exchange of Coachman—Hacienda de Mochitilite—Country Aspect—Hacienda de San Tomas—Danger of an Attack by Ladrones—Hacienda de Quemada—Population—La Villa de Magdalena—Population—Residences—Plaza—Lake Magdalena—Sunrise—Pursuits—Schools—Scenery of Mountain Landscape—Tequila—Its Population—Spanish Policy—La Plaza—Breakfast—Stroll—Mexican Feelings towards Americans—Beauty of this Town—Schools—Churches—Stores—Maguey, or, Agave Americana.

AMIGO MIO:—*Esta Fonda*, or this hotel, is situated rather on a plain, compared with much of the country we had recently passed through. All of us being much fatigued on our arrival at eight o'clock P. M. and after washing our hands and faces thoroughly, several of us being so much wearied, betook ourselves to a low couch for a few moments;—awaiting the welcome sound of the dinner and supper bell.

It came as one euphonious sound, resounding through the hall and thick walls, and elicited even now a momentary smile; though we all felt too ill-humored and exhausted for want of rest, to be really agreeable to ourselves. The table was not sumptuously supplied, nor with such as might have been purchased for its use at *el plan de Barrancas;* yet there was enough to satisfy hunger, and as much as we could reasonably expect a French hotel on the western slope of the Cordillera to be supplied or burthened with.

In the order of our repast, first came *la supa*, which was

quite warm and palatable, but just so *much, no mas;* then came on, pell-mell, roasted beef, salad, bread, eggs, tortillas, frijoles, *y carné del buey con chile colorado,* claret and coffee; notwithstanding these many dishes, there seemed to be wanting that ample fullness to complete a good dinner, which is so easily obtained at any good hotel throughout the valley of the Mississippi.

It is not so much in want of materials raised in the country to be cooked, as it is a knowledge and disposition in this class of hotels to present every dish neatly, and in an inviting and cordial manner. And in this view, how few there are, who, keeping public entertainments on highways, or in towns or cities, endeavor to thoroughly study their avocations in all their peculiar departments, meeting in a reasonable manner the exigencies of the *traveling will.* And consequently, their many bankruptcies and entire failures must naturally ensue, involving themselves and others in comparative poverty and misery, from the want of *sheer attention.*

Dinner being over at nine o'clock, P. M., we severally repaired to our bed-chambers where we had hoped to rest a few hours; and it was a few hours, for one o'clock in the morning we had understood to be the appointed hour of departing on to Guadalajara. I must not omit to confess that, on this occasion, though on a hard bed for the primitive and golden days of California, in the record of American history, sleep—not downy sleep—came and went quickly; as the transit of three and a-half hours had not seemed to have begun, when a loud call awakened us from our midnight slumbers to be up and ready.

Having arisen and washed ourselves, not deigning to use the toilette stand, but to comb our lengthened locks; we all repaired to the dining saloon to take a luncheon and a cup of coffee, or chocolate, before departing. Our party

consisted of Señor Augsburgh himself, wife, three children, two male and two female servants, with a Mexican gentleman and myself. From the appearance about this hotel, and what we could see on departing, I should infer that little attention is paid to any thing else than hotel callings; though in a comparative paradise for the cultivation of various productions, indigenous to this favored country. La Fonda looked rather capacious, and possessed of several apartments, not arranged so much for the convenience of the traveler, as that of the landlord; it is one story high, and has a *portico* about fifteen feet wide on either side with arches and archivolts, and also entablatures, as usual for the better class of dwellings in Western Mexico. It is constructed of soft-burnt bricks; and after having been plastered on both sides by a species of hydraulic cement, it is white-washed, which gives this travelers' mansion a quiet neatness,—yet not a "mansion in the skies." Having made all the observations consistent with so short a delay, and being all ready for departure—our trunks having been secured on the stage boot behind the box, in the usual Mexican style, as security against *ladrones*—we set out at the hour designated, at full speed, yet the road being full of gulches and spiral ridges coming down from the summit range of las Cordilleras, the coachman had to slacken or increase the speed of the mules, according to the character of the region of country we were passing over.

As I observed, we had exchanged our coachman, or *el cochero de nosotros*, and got another who appeared to well understand his business, and the dangers of the road. So far as Mexican coachmen have, on the public roads, come under my notice while traveling in this Republic, my conviction would lead me to judge them highly meritorious, and as being remarkably attentive to the full performance of their several duties. Passing on leisurely over eleva-

tions of rather small magnitude, we soon came to la Hacienda de Mochitillte, one hundred and six miles from Tepic, commanding a beautiful aspect, which I found well watered and adapted to a bountiful supply of the necessaries of man. It possesses a population of near seven hundred souls, nineteen-twentieths of whom at least, flow from the mixed breeds, and perform the labors required at esta Hacienda. With a new relay of mules six in number, and a pause of a few moments, we continued our course carefully, measuring our pace and being on the lookout for a band of *ladrones* infesting this region of country, and expecting from them an attack at any moment. We quickly escaped from these anticipated dangers, reaching la Hacienda de San Thomas, one hundred and fourteen miles from Tepic. The population at this place numbered about two hundred, and that consisted mostly of Indians, who seemed to live in poor miserable huts, and barely produced fruits and vegetables enough to yield themselves a livelihood.

Having adjusted a new relay, for relays are necessarily frequent through gulches and over mountains, we went on, sleepy and fatigued, passing checkered scenery, deep ravines and mountain peaks, yet not daring to sleep for fear of an immediate attack. Even when no attack should be designed, one's suspicion becomes so much excited from hearing the many flying reports, *ó noticias muchas volantas*, that he feels his own personal safety devolve on his alertness and *will* in self-defence. Continuing our star-light traveling, as I have just observed, our minds were but little diverted from the road in extending the acuteness of our vision; for objects many times appeared rather too indistinct, to conceive in the bound of reasonable thought, just and correct notions of their formation.

Not having traveled far, our attention was arrested by arriving at la Hacienda de Quemada, distant one hundred

and six miles from Tepic. The population here is inconsiderable, amounting to one hundred, and at least nine-tenths of these are Indians; though I must confess that I did not notice much their phrenological developments, nor the texture of their skins; but I soon became fully convinced from the scintillation of the silvery gems above, that they had not fully erased, by washing themselves, their dusky hues, which cast a glossy reflection as the *position* of their bodies was *turned* to *light*.

Having breathed a moment and cast our eyes to Heaven for a little more light (not "canister" as in the battle of *Vista Buena*) we sallied on, seemingly indifferent as to the surrounding dangers. Near seven o'clock in the morning, we had arrived at la Villa de Magdalena, one hundred and twenty miles from Tepic, with a population of twenty-five hundred *souls*. The complexion of the Mexicans at this town appeared as usual, and I should set down fully eleven-twelfths as possessed of a dusky or brownish mixture. Esta villa is situated on a beautiful plain surrounded by lofty summits, cleaving the floating clouds. It is regularly laid out, and near the center there is an area of five acres, appropriated *como Plaza Publica*, surrounded by public and private buildings; consisting of a church built in modern Gothic style, a school-house, and an institution of learning for both sexes, a Hall of Audience, *Plaza de Armas*, and also of stores, and *una Fonda, con casas privadas*. Private residences and the public square, I noticed to be ornamented with running rills, fountains, and moreover with tropical fruit-bearing trees, commingling their rich fragrance, to be wafted by the mountain breeze, like the far-famed aroma on the desert shore of Arabia, which makes the Arab sigh, and impatient for his home—the balmy land of his fathers.

The same order of architecture, and the same manner of

irrigating the town, and of paving the streets and side-walks, are observed in esta villa, as I have heretofore mentioned with reference to pueblos and villas of a similar magnitude. Within a short distance from this town in a north-east direction, there is a lake of the same name, el *lago* de Magdalena. It is the first lake bearing with it this signification in appearance, which I have noticed in the course of my recent travels on the Western Slope; and though comparatively small and unadapted to the furtherance of inland commerce, yet nearly on a level with much of the surface of the surrounding country adjacent to this villa, and encompassed at no great distance, by elevations of different magnitudes, with sloping declivities peculiar to volcanic convulsions; I could not but admire this pleasing contrast with my past observations, as the rising sun reflected his golden rays over this lake of crystal water. This was on an April morning, and the sun enlivened all surrounding objects; the aromatic breeze arose from the mountain peaks, and coming down, and accompanying us whithersoever we might go; we felt cheered, not so much by the sallies of youth, as by the happy spot which we were then humoring ourselves to note.

The pursuits, in this villa, are various, combining that of *teniendo fondas*, with commercial, agricultural, horticultural and grazing. These are somewhat advanced, though on a small scale, and the productions are much the same as those heretofore mentioned, growing in this most prolific and congenial climate.

With reference to the schools, I understood that the same system of tuition prevailed here, as in other places having come under my notice; the youth being taught more the notions of motion and graceful evolution, characteristic of the faith, than those of the arts and sciences, which radiate their benign influence upon the body politic, singling them-

selves out as guides of domestic and public happiness and prosperity, promoters of the public peace, and bulwarks in securing and maintaining the safety of the State.

Having remained at this villa no longer than to take a peep at its site, and its general characteristics, and to be supplied with a new relay of mules, we were soon ready to proceed. It had now become quite warm, as the sun was fast approaching his meridian height, though forward we rolled on over the *stony* pavements, thundering like distant artillery, and soon by rapid pace, we skirted the south side of the lake, riding along with a beautiful plain in front, on the right and behind us; yet at a distance, our admiration was much more excited in beholding the picturesque scenery of mountain landscapes, in all the varied forms of conic or transverse contours, which volcanic heat can mould.

In the distance of eighteen miles, no characteristic difference in the general constitutional features of the country could be noticed, although I do not desire to be understood that it is a complete monotony, nor that the lake, nor this particular valley accompanied us; but that changes, peculiar to a naturally convulsed country, were constantly arising to our view.

Effecting one relay in this intervening space, at ten o'clock, A. M., we arrived at la Villa de Tequila, one hundred and thirty-eight miles from Tepic; being a city of considerable size, as the population is estimated to be over five thousand, citizens of various shades included. So far as I could conceive in my mind the characteristics of this villa, it occurred to me that the streets crossed each other at right angles, and that the streets and side-walks were remarkably narrow, as common in Spanish and Mexican countries, which policy, being too manifest to be contested, rather indicates, notwithstanding Spain had, in the days of her brightest prosperity, scarcely any setting

sun, that she possessed then, as now, a constitutional jealousness and suspicion, natural principles of her government; those of *policy* and of domestic regulations, too niggardly, too parsimonious to be long prospered. Instances with reference to these points rise in endless succession, as one explores the boundless scope of her once almost unlimited possessions.

The lands where her new and proud cities were erected had not been the happy recipients of the contending parties in the concessions of mutual rights; one receiving land, and the other party, an equivalent; but the one came to an unknown land, with sword and cross in hand, guardian angels, emblems of mercy, love and peace, demanding an unconditional surrender of all their natural rights, and the erection of their cross, the sacred symbol of their faith, over the most holy and ancestral rites which bound these poor Indians to their God! From this consideration of Spain, one would naturally come to the conclusion that she might have granted a sufficiency of land to her rising cities, to have admitted of spacious streets, invaluable acquirements to the promotion of health within the tropics.

La Plaza, or the public square, is laid out neatly, and ornamented with some degree of taste and convenience, having respect to the increase of pleasure in social promenading. It is watered by the turning of a small stream through the city, which I now remember ran most beautifully in the piazza over a pebbly bottom of various hues, near *la Fonda de Tequila*, where we had put up for breakfast.

Our breakfast this morning, as usual in traveling or otherwise, came on at ten o'clock, and consisted of nearly the same varieties as our dinners had the preceding night at el Plan de Barrancas, with the addition of good chocolate and milk, and of an abundance of all the other substantial

nourishments grown in this country, all being well cooked and most cordially served. This over, I walked about *esta casa* a few moments, and noticed that mine host and hostess were Mexicans, almost white, good natured and courteous to travelers.

There may be an implacable hatred harbored in the bosoms of the Mexican people towards Americans, and this may rise and fall like the pendulum to a clock or the ebb of the sea; there may be the ranklings of the war, probing their hearts and cankering their reasons; there may be corrupt and out-lawed Americans treading their generous and forbearing soil; and there may be foreign and intestine enemies to the Americans, moving their dormant spirits to action against the apparent policy of the United States; notwithstanding these circumstances and considerations, so natural to a mercurial people, it would have been extremely difficult for me, in most cases, to have discovered any tenable grounds, whereby I might personally utter any complaint against these people, either nationally or privately, as infringing upon the conceded rights guaranteed by the treaty stipulations existing between the two Republics.

Having rested myself on a lounge awhile, I walked out into the *Plaza publica*, where I saw a murmuring rill, and a crystal fountain, jetting up its silver drops into the air, and then receding like mist from the clouds. There I beheld a permanent reservoir encircling this fountain, constructed of stones and cement, with a circular basement around it, and with octangular promenades laid in flagstones, leading off divergingly and uniting with the main promenade, which embraces the area of the whole *square*.

Orange trees are set around the plaza, and along the promenades, about twenty feet apart, which I was informed were in perpetual verdure, blooming and bearing the whole year. This is not Eden of yore, but then, I thought an

Eden might be made of it under the indulgent and fostering care of the arts and sciences.

In this town there are several schools or institutions of learning, and while here, I understood that they were generally attended by a few *blondish*, yet mostly dusky tints; indicating strange tastes in the germinal and conceptive *apprehensions*, without awakening the *judgment* as to *consequences*. Here I also saw a church and other public buildings, such as the Hall of Audience, and *la plaza de armas*, situated fronting the public square. Here too, fronting *la plaza publica*, I noticed many stores possessing foreign and domestic merchandise, shops of various kinds peculiar to the avocations and demands of this region and private residences with piazzas in the center, and these generally ornamented by the tropical growths of the country, and playful fountains. The streets and side walks are paved with cobble and flag-stones in the usual manner, with reference to the notion of drainage.

Here I saw not, nor heard of any place of public amusement, nor of a public library, nor gallery of paintings, nor of sculpture, except *de un cereamiento para las battallas de toros*, or a place for bull-fighting.

The productions, in every respect, appeared the same throughout this region, with the exception of the cultivation of the Maguey or Agave Americana. This kind of agriculture abounds near this villa and region, almost to the exclusion of other productions, profitable in themselves, and of as much benefit to the promotion of man's happiness and prosperity.

In my next, amigo mio, I will give you a description of this plant, and its utility to man in by-gone days, as well as at present.

Adios,

Señor,

COLA.

CINCINNATUS.

LETTER XXXVII.

Description of El Maguey at Tequila—Known to the Aztecs—Its Uses and Adaptations among the Aztecs and Mexicans—Departure from Tequila—Pueblo de Amatitlan—Population—Country Scenery—Guard of thirty Soldiers—Fears of Ladrones—Hacienda de Haastia.

AMIGO MIO:—El Maguey or Agave Americana is a plant recognized to have been well known, and its peculiar properties thoroughly understood and appreciated by the Aztec race, who had swept over the fair plains of Anahuac, years prior to the coming of the Spaniards. Their application of it in their domestic requirements, as well as those of State, I shall fully allude to hereafter. This plant is indigenous to the country and grows wild in almost every portion of it, being remarkably hardy and capable of enduring most incredible and inconceivable draughts. Its growth is slow, or accelerated in proportion to the fertility or humidity of the soil; though of the two, a tolerably arid soil is the better. Its leaves are from four to eight feet long, nearly a foot wide, and from one half to an inch and a half thick in the center, possessing a deep green color, and full of prickles or thorns on the edges and terminus, and in form, rather lanceolate. Its stem not unfrequently rises to the height of twenty feet; and it is my present impression that I have seen the stem of this plant in its

flowering season, extend up to the height of forty feet in this region of country, or rather on the western slope of the Cordillera, as well as elsewhere.

While at Tequila, I heard this plant not inaptly termed the vine of Mexico; and one would very naturally come to that conclusion, having a thorough knowledge of its peculiar properties. Where the soil is good and the cultivation of it has been attentively pursued, it is ripe in five years from planting; but in case the soil not being generous to promote its growth, then it takes from eight to ten years. The manner of its propagation is by the means of slips, just having sprung from the mother-plant near the surface of the ground; these are set about four feet apart, although I saw them set somewhat further. From this time on till maturity, the chief object would appear to be, to keep this plantation free of weeds; and in this country it is done by the Indians, using hoes, similar to those used by the negros in the southern portion of the United States.

Owing to the uncertainty in the length of time requisite for this plant to mature, the period of its flowering is quite uncertain, yet this is the moment of its fast coming into utility; and consequently, the exact time is attentively watched, when the stem of the flower begins to shoot up. The top is then cut off, so as to leave an impression or concavity for the reception of the juice, which is constantly flowing for the space of several months. In the depression of this incision, the arteries deposit the rising juice, which would have naturally flown to expand the blossoms. The bundle of central leaves having been cut away, the wound is gradually enlarged as the occasion may require, and covered with green foliage, which is drawn close, and tied at the top.

A single plant, well matured and grown in a rich soil, is frequently continued to flow from three to five months, pro-

ducing each day from twelve to fifteen pints, or cuartillos, which would be on an average, from six to seven quarts per day, worth at least twenty-five cents a gallon at las Haciendas. The juice or honey issuing from this wound, is of a thick consistency, and its taste is agreeable, not unlike that of a subacid. Its fermentation is easily effected from the amount of sugary or mucilaginous substance, so abundant in its constituent properties; and when impatient to have it immediately fermented, it is accomplished by simply adding a little pulque, and in three or four days its taste resembles that of new cider, though emitting a disagreeable odor, like that of putrid meat. This is owing to the rich vegetable matter in the juice, which has not wholly decomposed and worked off by fermentation. Like most of the other fermented juices in a partially crude state, I discovered that the drinking of it was a habit, and that, too, very soon acquired, and also that an inveterate dislike for its use might be soon overcome by partaking of it in its freshest state. Europeans and Americans seldom relish it at first, but remaining a few years in the region of its growth and partaking of it as a beverage frequently, they become as fond of it as the Mexicans themselves.

By distillation, a very intoxicating drink can be made of it, which in some parts of the Republic where the plant is much cultivated, has been pursued with great diligence and profit. The alcohol and brandy made of it, have been represented to me as being equal, in point of spirituous properties, to those liquors made of grain and vegetables better known to us. Without this process of distillation, it seldom intoxicates, having not, in what an ordinary man would drink, enough of those baneful properties to produce any injurious effects; but on the contrary, it is considered by physicians and those well acquainted with its medicinal characteristics, as nutritive, cooling, invigorating and stomachic.

The stem of this plant, which bears the blossoms, rises from the center of the leaves, and the branches issue from every side, and in such a manner as to form a kind of pyramid, composed of greenish-yellow flowers, which stand erect and are seen in thick clusters at every point. When in full blossom it presents an appearance really magnificent and splendid; and in this most favorable climate, where no cold winds nor frosts prevail, blossoms succeed blossoms for several months without interruption, heightening its expressive beauty by its spiral stem, which shoots up as if by the plumb-line of a master workman. The ancient Aztecs well understood the nature of this plant, and its varied uses as applied by different nations—barbarous, civilized or enlightened, in more modern times. In their onward march of emigration, amalgamation and constant collision with heterogeneous tribes, light was ushered in upon their dim past; particularly so by following the footsteps of the ancient Toltecs, who had but just passed away, leaving the crumbling monuments of the arts and sciences in their wake, which our Prescott has deciphered from the sacred scrolls of antiquity, embalmed by a few holy fathers of the Church at the time of the conquest, and recorded upon his historic page as an heritage to coming years. The outside bark of the Aztec Maguey, after having been carefully peeled off, was macerated, and then a softening and bleaching process was continued with it till the fibres were rendered fine, which adapted them for immediate use, or that of manufacturing. It was applied for clothing and various other purposes and requirements in domestic life; and further, the hieroglyphical figures of the Aztecs were painted on paper made of these fibres thus macerated and softened, and afterwards disposed in layers. The prickles or thorns already alluded to, on the edges of the leaves, served these simple people with pins, needles and nails; and the priests, to carry

out their piety and religion in swaying the masses of the ignorant and unreflective, and impressing their sacred importance, pierced their arms and breasts with those thorns, performing their penitent acts of expiation in this cruel manner, as if pleasing to an All-wise Providence. The Aztecs too, understood the season of its inflorescence, and watched its coming on with anxious care, and when the time had drawn nigh they obeyed the same laws which govern the Mexicans at this time in the process of its use by tapping it, though they did but make its juice into pulque, which they drank as an exhilerating beverage on festive occasions, yet seldom to intoxication. And out of the root of this plant, they formed most palatable dishes, even, so said, for fastidious epicures, which were reputed to be highly farinaceous as well as very nutritious.

El Maguey, or Agave Americana of Mexico, is considered one of the most valuable of the extensive tribe of aloes, now so well known for their medicinal properties and useful purposes in each division of the globe. There is one kind called *Pita*, which is mentioned as possessing remarkably delicate fibres, out of which fine thread and cloth are said to have been manufactured by the Aztecs. The paper made of the macerated, softened and bleached Maguey, is represented as having been remarkably pliable and far more beautiful than the papyrus of the Egyptians, or the parchment of more modern times. The Aztec Maguey, like the Egyptian papyrus, or the European parchment, afforded them a very material scroll to inscribe their history, their arts and sciences upon, in the form of emblematical characteristics. It was moreover, well disposed to retain the impression of various brilliant colors dyed or stamped on it by the Aztec artists, and to set them out in *basso relievo*. The leaves of this most valuable plant were then as now, used for thatching the roofs of buildings where wood is scarce or inaccessible.

In the fair and beautiful valleys, on the rolling plains and sloping declivities of the mountains, throughout ancient Anahuac and modern Mexico, this plant was at the service of the husbandman for not only the varied purposes which I have mentioned, but it served as a hedge when set in rows to enclose the planted field; as beams for the roofs of the Aztec buildings, its trunks were applied; and its juices to that of making sugar and vinegar.

The fibres of this plant are now used in Mexico in the same manner as hemp in the United States for manufacturing rope, cordage and bagging; the bags made out of them for packing and other objects, are generally worth from fifteen to thirty dollars per hundred, and in good demand—though depending on their quality and size. From my own observation with reference to the staple of these macerated fibres of el Maguey, I should apprehend that the texture of the ropes and bags would not endure what the manufactured hemp might in the United States; for this staple does not seem to possess in its nature, those strong and tenacious qualities so well known in the other; notwithstanding, these fibres thus manufactured subserve the ends of inland commerce in thousands of different ways, and all useful. Considering the manifold applications of this extensive tribe of aloes, and particularly the one known as la Agave Americana, to the wants of man in all stages of human progression, especially within the tropics, we can notice but few plants known and recorded on the pages of history, encompassing within their folds so many useful and needful properties.

Therefore, in the contemplation of this plant, so well known in hot climates, we become more excited to study the book of nature; to discover new arrangements and combinations in the structure, qualities and in the properties of the vegetable kingdom, of which we can form no adequate

conception within our present sphere of knowledge, and to feel more keenly our dependence on an All-Wise and Directing Hand to lead us up that rugged hill of Natural Science. The uses which man has made of the larger species of these plants, in the primitive ages and developments of the past, as well as in the more refined age of human advancement, have been manifold and well adapted to promote him in the acquirement of his wants. In this view, the Negroes of the western coast of Africa have made ropes and woven nets of the fibrous parts of the leaves; while the Hottentots have hollowed out the stems of one of the kinds into quivers for their arrows; while the inhabitants of Jamaica have supplied themselves with fishing lines, bow strings, woven stockings and hammocks out of the fibrous parts; while eastern countries have used their juices in embalming, in order to preserve dead bodies from putrefaction; while the resinous parts of this juice have been adopted in hot climates to preserve ships' bottoms against the attacks of marine worms; while in the East Indies its juices have been applied as a varnish to preserve wood and skins from the attacks of destructive insects, and even living animals have been smeared with them for the same purpose; while the Mohammedans have consecrated, especially in Egypt, the aloe as a kind of symbolic plant, by dedicating it to the offices of religion, and by the pilgrims, in their return from Mecca, suspending it over their doors, to show that they had performed that holy journey; and while its properties in medicine have long been known and established, and also, in the arts, as the leaves of the Socotrine aloe have been particularly distinguished for affording a beautiful violet color, without the aid of a mordant to fix it; in ancient Anahuac, and in modern Mexico, the American aloe had, and has been, applied by the Aztecs and Mexicans, to almost every purpose of life.

Having taken our breakfast at Tequila and paused awhile to reconnoitre the site de la Villa as I have already remarked, we departed on our way, observing the country, as before, and seeing little worthy of note, till our arrival at el pueblo de Amatitlan, one hundred and fifty miles from Tepic, and with a population of four thousand citizens or more, and fully eleven-twelfths of whom are either Indians or mixed colors. The country approximating this town is truly beautiful, abounding in gentle undulations, level plains, and the picturesque scenery of mountain landscapes. Thence come the streams which refresh the earth and make a few spots produce sustenance for thousands. And to these hoary peaks, towering into the skies and cleaving the misty way, from which the liquid showers descend, man should look up with reverence; for they serve as the electric rods to arrest the passing scuds positively electrified, and thereby moisten the dry yet fertile earth.

This town is laid out much after the manner of Tequila, with reference to its streets and side walks, and also la plaza publica, which is ornamented with a city stream and fountain, and orange trees; and in front of it with buildings, both public and private, of a similar character in their architectural construction. Receiving our relay of mules, we journeyed on over a country equally as broken as any we had passed; presenting a full variety of checkered scenery. Ere we had traveled far, the guard of some thirty Mexican soldiers fell in by degrees to defend us in case of an attack made on the stage by los ladrones, infesting this region of country and inhabiting las cañadas and fastnesses of the mountains, which here single themselves out in alto-relievo, as being peculiarly adapted to such pursuits. This guard had been engaged by Señor Augsburgh prior to our passing through, as it was considered unsafe, especially with a family; for many times the stages had been attacked, I was

informed, with ladies in them, and no distinction was paid to sex by the merciless ladrones; as clothing and jewelry, and whatsoever valuable, frequently whether on or off of their persons, were appropriated without taking life, if no resistance should be offered. In such cases, the outraged travelers would have to pass on in the stage nearly in a state of nudity, till having arrived at some station or town, where assistance might be granted; which I have been told, is usually bestowed with a cordial good heart.

Our guard were variously tinged, consisting of Mestizos, Mulattos and Zambos, with a few *pure blooded* Indians, all mounted *astride*, and armed with knives, lances and bayonetted carbines respectively. They presented to us rather a military aspect, riding on the full bound to keep pace with the stage, and on the side, and ahead of it a short distance, ready in case of instant attack, which we were expecting from the flying reports that we had heard along the road. They carried in their countenances a fierce determination, though now and then, they were enlivened by smiles and gesticulations, as they approached us nearer by the angles and curves of the road, and as they appeared to be amused by the motion of the mules, ten in number, traveling before the stage on a full lope, and themselves in close proximity. This scene to me, was truly lively and unique, and perhaps it would not have diminished much in this respect, had we had an attack; for on our part, it would have been a determined one at least. Moreover, it carried with me that appearance, from the fact that it was the first time in my life I had had the honor of being one of a company under the protection of a body guard. As near as I recollect, I submitted to it with due composure and complacency, however, against my democratic principles, and *notions* of policy.

The road through this region, led over some level, yet

mostly an undulating and broken surface. Passing on, we soon reached la Hacienda de Haastla, one hundred and fifty-six miles from Tepic, and with a population of four hundred souls, characteristic of the country. Our stay was short, still long enough to take a visional glance at surrounding objects, both natural and artificial; the former might, under the guidance of a cultivating hand, and just laws thoughtfully administered, be made to cheer and welcome the bosom of many a cottager, yet the latter seemed adapted to the native peculiarities that inhabited them and cultivated one rod around.

Turning an obtuse angle of the road, and in close contiguity with mountains heaped upon mountains on the left, and on the right with a beautiful extent of a rolling plain, stretching many a mile, we beheld that fatal spot, which had been marked by travelers' blood, and near it crosses are erected to indicate to passers-by, the spot where the deed took place. Here the blood-thirsty and marauding *ladrones* had come from their mountain *dens*, most impenetrable fastnesses, robbed the stage, and in the conflict, killed three travelers. At this moment our guard seemed to hover in around the stage, as if aware of a preconcerted spot, and to throw carefully around us their mantle of protection, not like that which *Cæsar* threw around himself, to hide his face and die, when he beheld in the Roman Senate Chamber, his beloved Brutus, on that fatal hour!

My next will be short, as this has been extended far beyond my intention at its commencement; still I hope it may reward you for a perusal.

Adios,

Señor,

AGRICOLA.

CINCINNATUS.

LETTHR XXXVIII.

Rancho de Cañada—Population—Unique appearance of the Guard, all Mounted—Necessity of close Vigilance—A Horseman seen at the base of the Mountain—A Ladrone—Scenery—Pueblo de los Cedazos—Population—La Pais—Los Pueblitos.

AMIGO MIO :—Continuing our journey from this fatal spot, with a thrill of discomposure, and our vision being bounded by unique and picturesque beauty on either side, and also in front and rear; soon we hailed with a joyful heart el Rancho de Cañada, one hundred and fifty-nine miles from Tepic; having a population of near two hundred, possessed of the same facial contours and dyed by the same indelible colors, without the necessity in the use of a mordant to stamp them deeper, as have so frequently fallen under my notice since coming into this Republic. Being supplied with a new relay of mules, and our guard with an exchange of horses, we journeyed forward with care and prudence on the wing, keeping a good lookout all around us, sending some of our fleetest horsemen into the near ravines and cañadas, while others cut the curves of the road, and a few kept in pace with the stage. It now and then seemed all *din* of *armor* and "horrible discord" in our onward speed, with horsemen galloping, and not unfrequently exclaiming "miren! miren, Ustedes!"

Ere time had seemingly stolen the march of our travel, we came upon el Pueblo de los Cedazos, one hundred and sixty-two miles from the city of Tepic. The population here rises to near three hundred, possessing the same average, from all appearance with regard to various colors, as at el Rancho de la Cañada. The same advantages with reference to agriculture and grazing, and the same productions and avocations of the community, appeared to prevail through this region of country, and impress themselves upon the mind of a tourist, as have quite commonly excited my curiosity and struck my attention in traveling thus far into this portion of Western Anahuac.

Having paused to breathe awhile and water our mules and horses, and to awaken in our guard the necessity of exercising the most rigid vigilance, with respect to seeing distant horsemen riding along the skirts of the mountains on either side of the road, as they were not far from it. Ere a few moments had elapsed, we all espied a lone horseman passing *lonely* and *cringingly* along over broken slopes, near the base of towering peaks, and all made ready for an instant attack, as the party with us formed the impression that he was acting as a sentinel; and, by a certain motion of his horse, or a preconcerted signal, he could have communicated to other sentinels, rallied around himself his force of marauding ladrones, and have taken our effects, as well as all about our persons, which is too frequently the case. But this horseman soon discovered, in taking a more minute telescopic survey of our arms and men, that it might be a contest of no pleasant undertaking, and hence, we passed on as yet unharmed.

In less than one-half hour, we arrived at la Hacienda de Hastillen, not being extensively cultivated, nor surrounded by those substantial walls which marked and lined the sides of the road in passing out from Tepic. La casa prin-

cipal and the outbuildings seemed not distinguished by any peculiar characteristics which I have not mentioned, when las Haciendas have presented themselves to my view since leaving Tepic. The population, I was informed, amounted to one hundred, and with few exceptions it is much mixed, consisting of all the shades so peculiar to this country.

Our guard keeping pace with the stage, or nearly so; the security which they apparently afforded us, and the life and exciting influence that they produced, with a rolling surface under our feet, and matter once chaotic and melted in the depths of volcanic fires most gaseous, and shot up with many a surging throe, with many a winding flame, and with many a thundering *roar*, making the hills to shake, and lastly moulded into mountains, whose various and lofty sides and peaks bewilder the imagination to fathom or describe; all these circumstances, at this particular conjuncture, coming into mind and asking a moment's pause in thought, produced in us sensations peculiar to the occasion, of fear and indifference, of excitement and composure, of disgust and admiration, and of amazement and consternation.

Passing through these events thus excited, we seemed not to note time, but we passed on, exerting the utmost of our vision to record in our minds the passing scene of valleys and mountains in all promiscuous shapes, with scrubby trees, running streams, and projecting rocks upon rocks. In this speedy march, we quickly reached *los Pueblitos*, where we received a new relay of mules, and where our guard mostly dispersed, deeming that they had protected and delivered us from the dangers of the way. Thence to the city of Guadalajara being but six miles, and through settlements, and one hundred and seventy-four miles from Tepic, we felt as if we could comparatively travel alone over this part of the road, and effect our arrival in safety.

Los Pueblitos will elicit my attention after my arrival

in the city of Guadalajara, and when I shall be extending my survey over *its* rich and beautiful valley.

Wherefore, I will bid you adieu, resuming my pen when a good and exhilarating ablution and repose shall have refreshed myself, now in *deshabille*, and wearied by too long and sleepless nights, having passed without due account.

Adios,

Señor,

AGRICOL

CINCINNATUS.

LETTER XXXIX.

Arrival at Guadalajara—Fonda de Frances—Review—Description of this Hotel—Court-Yard Ornaments—Site of the City—Dinner—City Water—Streets Side Walks—Extent of the City—Las Plazas—Their Ornaments—Mexican Acquaintances—An American—Climate—Buildings, Public and Private Architecture—Cathedral—Promenades—Portales—Alameda—Churches—Institutions of Learning—Beggars Bishop's Palace—Theatre—City Market—Fruits—Productions—Thoroughfare from San Blas to Vera Cruz—Population—City Garrison—City Animation—Pursuits.

AMIGO MIO :—Happy am I to have arrived in the city of Guadalajara, safe from the tediousness of the road, and the thousand and one dangers which surrounded the fertile spots where man should plant and gather in peace; and safe from the road which, binding the Gulf of Mexico and the Pacific ocean, as a natural band to annihilate comparative distances, should be the pride and rallying point of architectural genius, in the progress of steam locomotion. Thrice happy was I to book my name on the register at la Fonda de Frances, and to feel that I was again restored to the bands and within the pale of civilized security. We arrived at five o'clock Saturday afternoon; and having been shown my apartment, fronting the piazza, though small yet beautifully ornamented with shrubs and flowers, all in bloom, and receiving my baggage, I felt a joyful thrill of most cordial emotion, enliven and bid me be thankful, contemplating the anticipated dangers, the fatigues and scenes we had

passed through in traveling over this tedious, though interesting, yet to an American, a lonesome road.

Having refreshed myself thus, I walked out of my room, and taking a leisurely survey of the court-yard in the center of this hotel, I noticed that in construction and ornament, it much resembled that de la Fonda de Oro at Tepic. Consequently I felt much at home, so far as the interior part was concerned; but not so much thus with reference to the exterior balcony, the site of the building, its non-commanding position, and mine host; though he is a very good Frenchman, *de vista urbana; todavia tacaño en supliendo la mesa de suyo, con los provisiones requeridos para tal una casa.*

This evening I contented myself in remaining at the hotel, and on the balcony in front of *la plaza;* and taking a chair. I sat down composedly and quietly, amusing myself, and observing whatever around or askant might attract my attention or appear instructive. With pleasure did I observe the rail of the balusters forming the balustrade, strewed with plants, flowers and small shrubs, vivacious with green foliage and full of buds, and of opened and opening blossoms, emitting within the balcony where I was seated, fumes of sweet fragrance. Then too, I noticed climbing rose bushes having wended themselves up each column and turning the *architrave,* having shot along the the *entablature,*—there having wound themselves into beatuful festoons, and still extending their greedy tendrils; these I beheld in bloom, with expanded beauty, waving in a gentle breeze. Here, I contemplated my geographical position compared with the United States, and other foreign countries, and the general aspect of this region of country, as I entered the city, and concluded that this country is like a block of marble in the quarry, needing the chisel of a Phidias, and the eliciting and protecting genius of a Solon, to

show its latent properties in *alto-relievo*. In supervising an universal map, I beheld the site of the city of Guadalajara, occupying latitude north twenty-one degrees and nine minutes, and longitude west from Greenwich, one hundred and three degrees, two minutes and fifteen seconds, with an altitude of some more than three thousand feet above the level of the sea.

The hour of dining arrived at six o'clock, P. M., and the bell ringing a particularly melodious sound, though in a strange land with dissimilar tongues,—I repaired to that ever welcome saloon after a hard day's ride, and partook of mine host's good cheer, which I found on casting my eyes over the spacious board, quite ample for those present, and much the same as I have heretofore noticed with reference to Frenchmen's boards in western Mexico. Shortly after being seated at table, and looking about to observe the guests, I recognized my Mexican traveling acquaintance with his wife, sister-in-law and brother-in-law seated by themselves; and also an American, called Col. McC——, known by report to have been connected with Col. Zimerman's expedition bound apparently for Acapulco in aid and furtherance of Gen. Alvarez's Revolution, which has placed Gen. Comonfort President of the Mexican nation. My Mexican friends seemed quite happy here; the family being mostly together, and having fled from cruel persecution one hundred miles in the rear of Mazatlan. Owning a rich silver mine there, which has been in litigation several years, they were forced to depart for personal safety, as it is said the opposite party is being mainly successful in its retention, by siding there with the new government party, and threatening them with imprisonment and expulsion from the country in case of a continuance of their pertinacity to defend their patrimonial rights, and lodge themselves in their just possessions by an appeal to the supreme tribunal

of the Republic. They informed me that they intended to press the matter before that tribunal and the Mexican Congress this season; for the receipts from the *esta minera* amounted to several hundred thousand dollars per year. Quite enough to keep up a knot of contention, especially moreover, when in possession.

In alluding to the Colonel, I cannot but express my surprise to have been informed from his own lips, that he had been so badly duped by shrewd maneuvring in San Francisco, as to have got himself thus entangled in a foreign country, with the appellation of filibuster, and that too, among a people who could express no sympathy for Americans. He appeared at least sixty years old, gray-headed, yet healthy, active and intelligent, but somewhat dejected the evening of my arrival and first interview with him; for he was still a prisoner, and ordered by the Governor to leave in a few days for the city of Mexico, where his fate was to be decided.

Having rested myself much by a good night's sleep, I arose at early dawn and sallied out to take a view of the city, when still in slumber of the past night's mirthful pleasure or debauch. The position and height of the city of Guadalajara, in connection with its proximity to rich mining *districts*, and being immediately surrounded by a highly fertile valley, afford it many valuable and most important considerations, with reference to business and residence. In addition to these advantages, it possesses a climate unsurpassed by any region of country, and called in the Spanish language, *tierra templada;* it seldom varies more than five degrees of heat or cold,—the mean annual temperature standing at sixty-eight degrees. During the season of winter, when the cold winds sweep down the Cordillera and cause the old citizens with hoary locks, to exclaim, *muy frio, muncho fresco, esta mañana, Señor;* a

man from a northern region would hardly feel a change from perpetual spring at such a time, and barely would there be a slight hoar frost to *tinge* the most delicate blossoms.

This city is supplied with water from el Cerro del Col, nine miles from the city, and is led in by the means of an aqueduct, affording an abundance of the crystal fluid for private and public *appliances*. This city is laid out with quite liberal notions, compared with many I have visited, with respect to the streets and public squares, or plazas publicas. Most of the streets cross each other at right angles, and will nearly average thirty feet in width; though the side-walks are narrow. They are all paved in the usual manner; cobble stones are used for the streets, and flag stones for the side-walks and narrow walks across the streets. I noticed that the streets had been paved in a concave form, so as to admit of easy drainage. So far as I could observe, the early occupants of the city had but little notion for civil engineering, as the grade of the city presented near the same appearance that it immediately assumed after the respiration of its site, from chaotic confusion.

The city is made to extend over a large surface, fully two miles square; though the buildings have appropriated to them, but a small extent of that spacious firmament above, being generally one story high, with level and large courtyards in the center. There are at present sixteen public squares, or plazas publicas; still some are small, varying much in size, and in ornamental beauty. La Plaza de Armas near the center of the city, ranks among the largest and carries with it more of the general appearance of business on a commercial and financial scale, than those situated in other portions of the city. I saw on the north side de esta plaza, a spacious edifice, the spire of which towering two

hundred feet in the aerial region, with proportions just, occupying the lower space, impressed me that this pile, made by human will, not like the tower of Babel, is consecrated to holy uses; and rising above all others and clad in fatherly ostentation and pedantic meekness; that it should receive the homage of unknown, or merely known thousands, at day or night, when the majesty of Heaven is radiating his beams into the utmost recesses, without bending *man* upon his *knees*, or suspending the *perspirative throe* of required labor, *surpasses* the known law of Nature; and that too, far beyond reasonable conception, when man, the reputed image of his Creator, should prostrate himself at the tinkling of a bell.

This building is the cathedral of Guadalajara; and its style of architecture presented a combination of the Arabian and Moorish, known as the modern gothic style, with its pointed arches, elustered pillars, lofty towers and flying buttresses. In approaching the city, its conspicuous height and peculiar construction, indicate its design in its most favorable aspect to the observer, and convince him of the solidity and graudeur extant in the concentration of this mixed architectural taste.

The Government House of the *Department* of Gaudalajara occupies a position in front de esta Plaza, and is a commanding edifice in its external construction, and seems *de la vista* internal to be well adapted, in point of commodiousness, to the exigencies of its design. Its style of architecture resembles the Doric order, presenting a massive and grand appearance; nevertheless, rich and graceful. Los Portales de Comercio, consisting of arcades around three large square blocks of houses, are also numbered among those noted edifices of this city, which bear their proportion in ornamenting la Plaza de Armas. The streets opposite to estos Portales are wide and well paved; los Portales

are two stories high, abounding in the same columns, arches, balconies, and balustrades, as are usual in this style of architecture, which to the eye, resembles a mixture of the ancient Doric, with the modern combinations of Arabian and Moorish.

The sidewalks under the archivolts of the arcades are mechanically paved with square slate-colored flag-stones, which are laid remarkably even; and this united to their cooling characteristics, creates and promotes a desire in the citizens to promenade here frequently.

In this city, estos Portales are the chief centering rendezvous for all classes, from the meanest beggar that *dares* walk the streets, to those who wield millions at their nod; and when one takes his stand in this vicinity and reflects upon the characteristic contours of the *facial organs* of man, he is most forcibly reminded of Broadway, the Astor House, or City Hall, in New York city, or during the fall and winter, the Levee, La Fayette Square, or the St. Charles Hotel, in the city of New Orleans. I do not mean to say that there are as many foreigners here as there; but that there are equally as many strange *peculiarities*, which would greatly stagger the penetration and judgment of most men to analyze and adjust the several classes with method and propriety. The upper stories of estos Portales are generally occupied by the lessees of those below, with few exceptions; and these are divided into small apartments, consisting of stores and shops of various kinds, where European, Chinese and Mexican manufactures vie with each other for purchasers; though I am not aware that they exactly come into collision, so as to have a real *gentlemanly* side-walk fight. However, I have been informed, since this notice of them, that they use loud and threatening words, as to *smuggling*, *non-intercourse*, and high *duties*. In estos Portales there are many stalls, and on the side-walks near the

columns, there are also stands, where many of the domestic productions and manufactures are exposed for sale, as Mexican saddlery, shoes, boots, as well as much more of a similar nature; and images, rebozos, serapes, birds of various kinds, and of beautiful plumage; and Chinese baubles, to attract the attention, but not to enhance, for a moment, any real, but fancied pleasures. In fact, all the buildings embracing this square are two stories high, and noted for their size, commodiousness, adaptation to trade, and their generally imposing and architectural construction. Estos Portales are held as ecclesiastical property by the convents, and are rented out for a small annual consideration.

El Paseo is another public square for promenading generally and evening pleasure; and which is encompassed on either side by commodious buildings; though it is somewhat in the form of an avenue, shaded with a double row of beautiful trees, extending their long arms of green and glossy foliage, as *god-sends* in a heated day, when the sun has risen to his meridian height, and is vertically emitting his beams upon selected spots, rendered *concave* by *circular volcanic fires*. To enliven este Paseo and give it rather an Elysian enchantment, a crystal rill pours over various-colored pebbles of small magnitude, murmuring with a gentle voice, still not complaining nor accusing; but whispering, come with me, come with me! This promenade leads to plaza alguna, called la Alameda, which has, in point of design and combination of beauty in the adjustment of its elegantly conceived symmetrical proportions, far exceeded any other place for public walking, as having fallen under my observation in this city. The tasteful arrangement of the trees on esta plaza, does not exactly resemble an army in battle array; but they are set promiscuously and somewhat forest-like; and la plaza is made to extend over a large surface, with irregular alleys neatly paved in flag-stone

shape. All the plots between the trees are ornamented with plants, flowers, rosemaries, Castilian roses, and shrubs of various kinds of tropical growth, and also, with acacias and junipers,—most of which for nine months in the year, exhale their rich fragrance, with the addition of perennial orange blossoms in close contiguity. In the center of la Alameda, there is a beautiful fountain, streaming up by the force of internal pressure exerted on higher elevations, and darting off in a misty scud, tending to cool the spot and emit its genial influence to surrounding objects. Then all around the exterior de esta plaza, there flows one of nature's limpid rills, over pebbly shapes of hues unlike.

When man walks into this selected spot by morning or evening twilight, considering what is here deposited to please his fancy, or enliven his soul with a warm response of thankfulness; contemplating the waving gracefulness of perennial foliage, and blossoms of various shades of loveliness, with the inhalation of their balmy fragrance wafted on the breeze; and hearing the varied notes of the warbling songsters, like those of the birds of Paradise, and the far-famed nighingale; he feels entranced at the sight of such natural representations of a "Deity believed," and voluntarily to exclaim, "How thankful am I for an existence, to behold the beauties of nature, the combination of art naturally extended, and hear all this praised within these lovely bowers, by His ærial passengers."

In this city, aside from the Cathedral, there are nearly twenty other churches for divine worship, and these are generally spacious buildings, the basements being large to accomodate the congregation; notwithstanding, they would not begin to hold all the citizens, were they as much of a church-going people here, as I had conceived them to be in most catholic countries, before having fallen under my notice. But I discovered, as I have heretofore observed,

that the gentlemen attended church here generally as elsewhere in Mexican cities, leaving this ceremony and courtesy to the *gentler* sex and Indians; though if any of them have committed enormous sins, and evil report should get out to this effect, convincing them that they would thereby lose some of their "loaves and fishes," they might go to church, kneel before the consecrated altar and the Saints, saying over a short prayer, and then retiring to the confessional where sits the wonted Confessor—the reputed vicegerent of the Deity—and to him confess, asking regeneration, and paying a small pittance! Having thus quieted and *absolved themselves* from all *sin*, even to *many generations past*, if their *sins* had not been *forgiven*, they have fitted themselves for occupying their former position in society, it making but little difference what sins they might have committed.

These churches alluded to, combine much of the modern Gothic style of architecture; though I could trace by close observation, designs of the Byzantium style in their cupolas, slender pillars with tasteless capitals, and in their many minarets, though arranged somewhat in confusion. Connected with these edifices, there are numerous monasteries and convents applied for the education of the Clergy in all piety and religion, and for the infusion and transmission of Catholic tenets and dogmas, whether clear or enigmatical, through the influence of female pliancy and delicacy, as the characteristics of these institutions might seem to demand. While here, I was informed that there is quite a number of ecclesiastical institutions of learning; though both sexes are never taught in the same apartment. The institutions of a classic character for both sexes, as well as those of an elementary character, are all endowed and supported with liberal donations and franchises for the purpose of obtaining books and other requirements to prosecute the

arts and sciences, and for their present and future maintenance and advancement, and also with annual appropriations to secure the ends of their organization the more effectually. Here I saw manifested much of that highly laudable solicitation on the part of many of the citizens, with reference to the progress of the arts and sciences, and also a national ambition with respect to the position which these institutions might sustain, and acquire in the progress of time. All or most of the arts and sciences are taught, I have been informed, in these halls of learning, and that too—for this country—with a great degree of success. The young gentlemen and ladies in these institutions are not only taught piety and religion as in the more elementary schools, but they are taught those departments of learning with all the touches of thought and of action, which so eminently commend their results to the taste and admiration of the world.

In this distant land, and too often traduced, supposing it to exist without a soul, I was most happy to note that there is also demonstrated a noble public spirit, with reference to a careful regard for the sick and infirm, by the erection of an hospital and its liberal maintenance; and also by contributing to their wants when allowed to appear in the streets asking pittances. This is granted in most of Mexican cities one day in a week, and where I have traveled in the Republic, it appears to have fallen on Saturday. During a sojourn of near five months on the western slope of the Cordillera, in Anahuac, and visiting many of the most important towns and cities, traveling at the same time much through intervening districts of country, my sympathy and sensation of charity were seldom pained or excited by persons begging, except on prescribed occasions. Owing perhaps partly to climate, and partly to the political institutions of the Mexican people, a few establishments

of an eleemosynary character, I have noticed within the bounds of my travels, or through the reports of intelligent gentlemen who have explored the country much more than myself.

When the beggars are privileged to appear in the streets, it is seldom that they walk about to the annoyance of the citizens; but taking their respective stands, as if divided into districts among themselves by mutual consent, they either sit down on the edges of the sidewalks, or stand up, looking with a desirous gaze upon the passers-by; and on these occasions strangers generally bestow small pieces of money, while the citizens give them old clothes and food, with scarcely ever any money, which really contribute far more to their necessary wants.

The Bishop's palace, the Government mint, and the public theater, are edifices occupying conspicuous positions near the center of this city, combining beauty with grandeur and commodiousness, and possessing in their architectural designs and construction, all the refined and elevated characteristics of the Ionic, the Doric, and the Corinthian styles, with more modern touches peculiar to each order. The public Square, for selling provisions and vegetables, near *la Plaza de Armas*, is made to extend over a large surface, presenting to an American a peculiar uniqueness, which is certainly uncommon except in Spanish countries.

Apparently, all that goes or tends to go for the maintenance of human, or the lower animal life, is included in this market; and that too, in abundance, suited to the wants and tastes of this, a strange people. Such are sold in stalls, if I may be allowed the expression, mostly open to the air, yet covered with Maguey or tulé roofs, which are supported by crotched stakes driven in the ground. In case of rain, mats made of tulé or Maguey are hung up on the

weather side, leaving the rest exposed, except in cases of continuous cold storms, or such as the natives term to be of that character.

Here the city market men and women live apparently for ages, rearing their little ones about them, who, for peculiarity of dress and appearance, as also of traits in cant and trite sayings, would compete with any of this character I ever saw in other cities, and in distant countries. These characteristics purchase their supplies of the countrymen who surround this city, living in sparse numbers, dispersed over the fertile and undulating valley of Guadalajara, though at no great distance, in arroyos, cañadas, y barrancas, where, in this altitude, the finest fruits of the tropics are successfully cultivated. Corn, shelled or in roasting or boiling ears, beans, or frijoles, Chili colorado, water and musk melons, garlics, fresh meats of various kinds, and also poultry in abundance, eggs, whitish butter, of a miserable quality, lard, tallow, manioc, potatoes, both Irish and sweet, lettuce, radishes, fruits of various kinds, as bananas, plantains, oranges, citrons, limes, also the mamey colorado and chirrimoya, earthen ware for most all domestic uses, and various other articles of home-made manufacture, constitute the chief productions which I observed in this market.

While I was walking through this market of an early and bright morning, many of the countrymen, and some of the lower class of citizens I noticed seated or standing near a luncheon board, partaking of coffee, chocolate, and other refreshments, though mostly out in the open air. Nothing so much won my attention as the desirable mode of making their rich chocolate out of the cacao nuts, which are pulverized, and then boiled in milk, and perfumed with fresh and unadulterated vanilla. This delicious and nutritious beverage, made in such a manner, cannot be excelled by any other people; still the historian's page traces its com-

mon use to the ancient Aztecs, at the time of the conquest. Hence the Mexican custom of exposing it for sale in their market squares may be traced, as it was customary with those people to expose, on certain days, for sale in the public markets, their country productions and manufactures; at which times thousands of the citizens, especially in the city of Tenochtitlan, would assemble.

In my walks throughout the city I noticed other coffee and chocolate resorts, which appeared tolerably kept, both with regard to neatness and the drinkables and eatables set for the accommodation of the public.

So far as I observed the public houses for the accommodation of the traveling community, both foreign and native, and that of the citizens, I should regard as about equal to the fourth class hotels throughout the United States. I noticed two Fondas de Frances, and as many as twenty Fondas nativas in this city.

In comparison with similar throroughfares in the United States, this, embracing the Gulf of Mexico and the Pacific Ocean, and passing through a populous city, as Guadalajara, of more than 60,000 souls, presents but little travel, as the dangers of the way have to be necessarily encountered. Consequently few gentlemen travel for pleasure or exploration; and seldom have I noticed or heard of ladies of the best class in society traveling in this country, from place to place, as in other countries, except being connected with business of an important nature, or under an escort of Mexican soldiers. And as most of the citizens live in private houses, and prefer this to that of boarding, scarcely any patronage, of whatever kind, is extended to *las Fondas publicas*.

The city garrison consists of an extensive series of old Spanish buildings, fronting three streets, and the east side of the Plaza de Armas, and extends over two-thirds of an

entire square. This block of buildings, erected by the Spaniards when in possession of the country for a work-shop, and being commodious and well adapted, in point of location, to the present object, the Mexicans have, since taking possession of this portion of the country, retained as a fortification, where the government keeps constantly stationed from five hundred to one thousand soldiers, as the occasion would seem to require, and ready to obey instant orders. Fronting the Plaza de Armas, and the streets near the city garrison, a strict patrol is exercised at all hours, and no one is allowed to pass on the sidewalk near this citadel, as a soldier would immediately approach in such a case, and order the intended or accidental trespasser to walk elsewhere. This looks like arbitrary power assumed by a few epaulettes, trimmed with gold lace to show their ostentatious moves. Notwithstanding, in this miserably governed country, and this miserable material, for the most part, to govern, it may be necessary to draw such lines of demarcation between citizens and soldiers, for the public good; as the latter might be easily led astray if allowed to commingle freely with passers by, which, perhaps, could not be well prevented otherwise than as mentioned.

Like cities of the size of this in other States, it is far from being all life and vivacity in the display of business, of literature, of fashion, or of amusements, except in the grotesque customs of ecclesiastical processions. However, in the suburbs of the city, and in the streets seemingly deserted, many of the lower classes are engaged in their own houses, where they exercise trades of various kinds, and manufacture many articles of commerce, which are constantly exposed at the public stalls, *las tiendas y almacenes en los Portales.*

The industrial pursuits in this city are much varied, embracing carpenters, masons, silversmiths, blacksmiths, hat-

ters, shoe-makers, weavers, tinners, tanners, tailors, painters, sculptors, barbers, and potters; also such others as the wants of the city and country may seem to demand. These do not embrace the fine shades of distinction so common in the United States, and among other enlightened powers of the globe.

Longer than I should have done I have required your indulgent patience in the perusal of this; but having felt a lively and deep interest in what has, in this city, fallen under my notice, I had forgotten to revert my attention to the consideration of the length of this letter, till now.

Adios,

Señor,

AGRICOLA.

CINCINNATUS.

LETTER XL.

Learned Professions - Climate good for Talent Causes against Mexican Progress - Statesmen—Weekly Gazettes—Patriots—Population of the City—Wealth thereof Country Improvements—Government Expenses—Clergy Exempt - Las Fabricas de Algodon y Papel de Atemajac—Description of these—Señor Newton.

AMIGO MIO :—Though I am fond of tracing the figures and natural positions of countries, both physically and physiologically, to deduce for myself, their constituencies, and learn their peculiar characteristics, yet now and then, I love a moment's repose; however I may be attracted and enchained by the ornaments and beauties of nature, everywhere around me. Thus, amigo mio, I have rendered you my apology.

Turning my attention to the consideration of the city, I may observe that, from the information I was able to acquire, the learned professions of law and medicine, as well as those of tactics, and of divinity, are pursued and cared for by gentlemen's sons, more for their monied value and gleanings of office and position, than for any particular regard or ambition of rendering their names worthy of being transmitted to after ages, by the Herculean manifestations of talents latent or open, the indigenous productions of other countries! The causes of this indifference to become distinguished in the arts and sciences, which so generally prevails in this Republic, I trace not to the climate; for the climate is as

varied as the circumstances of that requirement may be necessary to promote a healthful pursuit in the attainment of those branches of literature, so useful and elevating to man in all the various offices of life.

Owing to the peculiar position which this country occupies geographically, it is divided according to its altitudes into three distinct climates; to wit: The first embraces the plains along the coast, called by the Mexicans *tierras calientes;* producing cotton, sugar, indigo, plantains and other tropical fruits; the second the declivities of the Cordillera, called *tierras templadas*, producing many of the grains and fruits of the temperate zones on their rolling slopes, but *en arroyos, cañadas, y barrancas;* the staples and fruits of *las tierras calientes;* and the third, the plains elevated more than seven thousand two hundred and eighteen feet above the sea, termed *tierras frias*, encompassing the whole table land of Mexico, and considered cold by the natives, although the ordinary warmth is much the same as that of Rome. And *did* Rome have no scholars in the arts, sciences, or tactics, in the days of her glory when she was not bound hand and foot, mind and matter, in one single notion of Church and State? There are other causes than this, which operate most powerfully and naturally against the progress of the Mexicans; and the chief of which results from the intermixture of the different raees, white and Indian, mostly. The one becomes degraded, while the other rises in the scale of progress. Another cause is the right of suffrage being extended to all colors, which nearly levels the white man, with all his boasted line of ancestral birth, in such a country, to the condition of the wild man of the forest!

In this city, I had the pleasure of becoming acquainted with a few Mexican statesmen; though prior to this, in Mazatlan and Tepic, the same acquaintance had been ex-

tended to me, during my short sojourn in each. Usually they are gentlemen of refined tastes, polished education, and of general information, having been educated in distant lands; and however good and talented they may be by nature or education, their task, for the onward improvement of the country, in an agricultural or scientific point of view, is a hard one, fettered and entrammeled by the influence of the clergy, continually binding like the grasp of Hercules, the *iron bands* of Church and State together, a moral and political curse and ruin to the fairest spot of God's footstool! While here, I noticed that there were published several weekly Gazettes; though they were extremely small, possessing little or no information, and no independence of character or of thought, being either under the strict surveillance of the Clergy or the Government. Freedom of speech, freedom of action, and freedom of the press, being accountable for a misuse of the same, constitute, according to natural law, a free and sovereign people; and until these points of natural rights are arrived at in a State,—can that State be free? Is Mexico free of thralldom, not special but common? The patriots of other nations should mourn for her, so fair and beautiful, so full of romance and towering thought, so abundant in the fecundity of nature, yet as plaintive for rule and order!

Conversing with a gentleman of intelligence, a native Mexican, I discovered, from a recent computation of the citizens in la ciudad de Guadalajara, that the population is estimated at some over sixty thousand, and fully eleven-twelfths of whom are at least mixed, and representatives of most any other race than the Castilian. This latter class and also a few of the former, are rich, possessing much valuable city property, and landed estates in the country, consisting of *ranchos y haciendas* where they have persons called Superintendentes reside and take charge of their affairs,

who are allowed to employ help under their direction, though generally as the occasion may require. *Estos ranchos y estas haciendas* produce, in portions of them, the grains of the temperate zones, and in other portions, cotton and sugar-cane; and besides these productions, grazing in all its departments is much attended to; though I saw in this region of country no improvements to reduce agriculture to a regular system; but such as the Romans and Aztecs had used by long inheritance, even before the Goths and Spaniards took España and Anahuac. If such were introduced and used, they would have a wonderful influence and spring of action to promote this branch of industry and make much more certain the common productions of the country, by preparing mainly the ground and cultivating it deeply during the dry season to obviate the effect of the drought. In my observations with respect to the stock of the country, such as horses, mules, cattle, sheep and hogs, I could see no progress of improvement in the way of importing foreign stock for crossing with choice home selections which is so universally acknowledged to be the only means to attain such an object; as developments can be obtained only through this process towards perfection both in the animal and vegetable kingdom.

Scarcely any attention is bestowed either publicly or privately concerning the improvements of the roads, the construction of bridges generally, the application of ferry-boats, or that of the grading of hills and mountain slopes. From this city there are wagon and carriage roads leading to San Blas on the west, to Santa Fé on the north, to Vera Cruz on the east, and to Zapotlan and Morelia on the south; however, they have not been much improved since the date of Mexican Independence. The same custom as to using pack mules prevails now, as did in the period of Spanish domination.

The manner of defraying the expenses of the Mexican Government, and that of the city, are by the imposition of enormously high duties on foreign importations, and by granting certain privileges and franchises, commensurate with the objects and emoluments of trades and commercial pursuits. Direct taxation on personal or real estate is light and but seldom resorted to, except in case of great emergency; consequently, the poor man with a large family, not being worth one thousand dollars, but being a large consumer, is taxed frequently much more than those worth five hundred thousand, or even a million of dollars. In this view, two-thirds of the whole landed estate in Mexico, are exempt from any contribution towards the support of the Government, as they belong to the Clergy. The latter class being few in comparison with the body politic, and only one-third of the landed estate being divided among the mass, the burden of the Government devolves upon the remarkably few owning real estate, and the masses who toil for a mere subsistence. The city, as well as the country rents are low; the proprietors usually intending to rent or farm out their property, so as to nett them five per cent. on their investment or valuation of the possessions so rented.

Near a league from Guadalajara, I rode out in a city coach, on the first morning after my arrival, to pay my respects to one of our own countrymen, Frederick Newton, who hailed from Massachusetts. It was in the early part of April, and the morning sun shone brilliantly on surrounding objects, while the giddy horses and coachman pranced along in joyous expectancy of a little earning for rented labor; and while I cast my eyes from the coach windows to whichsoever way, to inform my reason, and inspire my soul with new notions of a peculiar and strange people. The intervening tract seemed little cultivated or

subdued by man, after leaving the suburbs, till my near approach to la Fabrica de Algodon de Atemajac, which is situated five-sixths of the distance; though I must not omit to mention our crossing a heavy and well constructed bridge, made over a mountain stream, called Atemajac; yet comparatively dry, except in the rainy season. Este puente is near a mile and a-half de la ciudad, of more than three hundred feet long, and built upon stone arcades, and composed wholly of stones, both round and flag; the surface being paved with cobbles of an average size. This being north of the city, and apparently upon *un arroyo seco de el rio de Santiago*, which in summer, rises superfluent with water, is a point of great consideration to the Government. At the terminus of this bridge on the north, there is la Garita of the Government for receiving the imposts laid on agricultural productions, which would seem to minds of other nations like an unjust imposition upon the industry of the country. For the bulwarks of nations are not the individual governments themselves, but are composed of the industry, the contentment and prosperity of those who form the moving machine, the locomotive power of government. Therefore, a *government*, or *those* who are promoted to look out for the public good, should never directly overtax the industry of the country, but *encourage* and *protect* it in all possible ways; nor indirectly tax by imposts more than enough to set in motion, and sustain the *wheels* of the body politic, in the most frugal manner. For, if the individuals composing the nation are prosperous and rich, the government is also, and ready to meet any emergencies. The object *de la Garita* is to collect an impost off of the agricultural producer, for the privilege of selling the effects of his labor in the city. *Estas Garitas* are established on all the thoroughfares a short distance out of the city, and for the same purposes as heretofore mentioned.

Most of the surface of the valley of Guadalajara is much broken and cut into gulches, formed by the heavy tropical rains in summer, which seem to deluge the country, and devastate many a fertile field, which, in the days of yore, was clad with many a shrub, and many a blade of grass, and many a flower waving in the gentle, zephyr breeze.

Turning my attention again to my first morning visit, the great object of note which invited my notice after leaving the bridge, was *la Fabrica de Algodon*, and the ground about it. It is situated on a slight declivity from a level surface, and supplied with an abundance of water from an aqueduct, which is led from a small mountain stream formed by springs; this serves also for the purpose of irrigation, and likewise, for that of propelling una Fabrica de Papel, owned by the same company, and another Fabrica de Algodon, further down the stream and owned by another company. This aqueduct in part, and the dams for holding the water, consist of solid masonry. La Fabrica prima is near three hundred feet long, and one hundred feet wide, consisting of two stories in height, and of as many apartments as are adapted to the wants of the establishment. It is constructed in the form of a hollow, oblong square in front and rear, including all the appurtenances and buildings, which in front of the main building, extend near six hundred feet on either side; and this plot is ornamented with many orange trees promiscuously set out, and with a gentle rill purling among them; and which in rear from the main building, extend about sixty feet, having in close proximity a beautiful and highly ornamented pleasure garden, with streaming fountains and rare collections of flowers, plants, shrubs and trees from different zones, that here, like in their father-land, find a nurturing care and the distilled dews gently descending from Heaven. Esta Fabrica runs ninety looms, and employs two hundred native operatives,

besides several American mechanics, and one machinist, with a Superintendent; and the machinery including the whole mechanical apparatus, is constructed on a scale in proportion to the demand of the labor just mentioned. *La Fabrica de Papel* is near half a mile from this, and occupies a seeming concavity compared with the country around.

La Casa for the superintendent is detached from the paper factory near three hundred feet, having a neatly decorated yard in front, with a variety of flowers, plants, shrubs, and trees, mostly in modest bloom, filling the air with odoriferous perfumery. And in the rear of the main residence, are adjusted the out-houses and appurtenances of such a character as to impress one with order and convenience.

The Superintendent of this establishment is Señor Newton, as I before mentioned, whom I found, on a short acquaintance, to abound with courtesy, frankness and intelligence. He possesses to a remarkable extent, all those noble characteristics so becoming an American in a foreign land, with eyes, countenance and heart, open to be the medium of pleasure and information to one of his countrymen. He had been in this region of country for eight years, and since the construction of this factory. He now speaks and writes the Spanish language with propriety and ease; and he receives a liberal remuneration for his skill and knowledge in superintending this establishment. Throughout the pleasure-grounds and the several departments of this factory, Señor Newton conducted me, taking a *lively* interest in imparting much with reference to what we were noticing, and the character and past history of the country, especially since his arrival.

Here I saw imported, all the most common improvements made use of in the United States, and adjusted in the combination of requirements, to effect the same ends.

From my knowledge of mechanism, and its application to man's convenience, I was much impressed with the neatness and system of the several apartments, and of the machinery in the respective positions, which it seemed to occupy, in order to complete the design of the constructor. In these respects it indicated labor-saving; and in fact *todas las Fabricas de algodon y de papél*, throughout the Republic, are the only examples of this intention, which forcibly drew my admiration, causing me thus to observe in this portion of my journal.

The water wheel propelling this factory, is made of cast-iron, and was imported from New Jersey several years since. It is forty feet in diameter, well proportioned, susceptible of being taken apart, yet constructed with a view to compactness, strength and symmetrical beauty. The location where it is adjusted, is in the form of two capital Ls inverted, and on the west side of the main building. It is enclosed by a high stone wall; however, there is a shed projecting out, which amply protects it from the influence of the *weather*, beating rains, or tropical sun. Its position is such when hung upon its axis that its lower surface is twenty feet below the common level of the ground; and it is set and continued in motion by the means of the water from the aqueduct before alluded to, flowing through a small sluice constructed upon arches, with the form of continuous arcades, having a horizontal upper surface. Its motion is easy, graceful, and grand,—the water pouring upon it about five feet from its upper surface, and twenty-five feet from the basement floor. Its steady, strong and planetary movements, from sun to sun, and the consequences which it demonstrates in the performance of labor, combine to excite the wonder and admiration, the applause and reverence of the whole community. And many of the lower classes

have been known to ask: "Is there another such in that strange land?"

In my next I shall close my description of this factory, and I shall have passed on to other considerations of equal interest to you.

Adios,

Señor,

AGRICOLA.

CINCINNATUS.

LETTER XLI.

Further Description of the Factories aforesaid—Their Architecture—Señor Glassagara—His Education and Principles—His Cotton Factory—La Fabrica de Algodon de Escoba—Superintendent thereof—Description of the Residences of Señor Lowrie, and Señor Glassagara, and of the Cotton Factory—Cotton Stuffs—Cotton Imported—That grown in the Country—Stock thereof one year in advance—Prices of Cotton Cloth.

AMIGO MIO:—Resuming my labor at early morn, with the sun shining most brilliantly, I now invite you to return to the consideration of the paper factory, where I left off at the close of my last.

The cost of this iron wheel, delivered at this place by the way of Vera Cruz, on Mexican carts and wagons, arose to the sum of ten thousand dollars. The number of *hands* occupied in this factory generally rises to that of seventy-five, with fourteen engines and two machines, all of which are worked twelve hours per day; and these *considerations* will indicate nearly the amount of paper, of various kinds, manufactured in this establishment in the course of a year, supposing the whole apparatus to be kept in successful operation.

These two factories, cotton and paper, I was informed had cost the sum of seven hundred thousand dollars, when their whole appurtenances were completed for running; and

that both, after deducting all disbursements, return to the common stock company a nett annual profit of one hundred thousand dollars. The style of architecture observed with reference to these buildings under consideration, may be referred somewhat to the modern Gothic and Tuscan orders, however, to me it seemed rather difficult to trace any other orders than those of primitive convenience.

Returning to the city, and in a few days after having visited these establishments, I became acquainted through the kind office of Señor Augsburg with Señor Olassagara, of Guadalajara, a gentleman who has figured much in the arena of Mexican politics, during the iron sway of Gen. Santa Anna; however, he is possessed of liberal and extended notions with regard to government affairs being conducted on such principles as will afford stability and character to the governed. He was educated in England, having gone there when young, and has traveled extensively on the continent of Europe, and also on the American. Consequently, naturally quick of perception, and the application of new principles founded on reason and sense, he now stands like a pillar of light before his countrymen, in the advancement of the arts and sciences, and in the proud progress of horticultural and agricultural pursuits. He has a family of several children, upon whom he has exerted a parental and powerful influence with reference to their attaining a liberal education; and a portion of them *were* educated in the United States. And I was informed by a member of this family, that there were several Mexicans of this city, who have been educated there and also in Europe.

Learning that Señor Olassagara had *una Fabrica de Algodon*, near five leagues from the city of Gaudalajara, in a northwest direction, and receiving an invitation to visit it with himself in a few days, I deferred waiting that time,

owing to other engagements in contemplation, and again received the kind office of Señor Augsburgh in hiring for my use a servant and two horses well caparisoned, to accompany me to *la Fabrica de algodon de Escoba.* I felt as if I might hazard my life thus far, comparatively alone; for in the morning of the same day, report came into town, that a market-man on the same road had been robbed of his hard earnings; and that the day before, three or four *ladrones* had been shot, closely pursued by the police. However, having armed myself well for the occasion, and being determined I would not be overcome without a struggle for life, I sallied forth at ten o'clock, A. M., with my servant in the rear, on a bounding lope through the streets, the common gait of the country; for at this time of the day, few persons appear walking about, as the sun increases his vertical heat.

Taking the road leading towards Tepic, with a good horse under me, and supple in motion, I soon came out into the open valley of Guadalajara, the configuration and apparent characteristics of which, I shall dwell somewhat upon, after I shall have written what I have presently in view.

I traveled on, pasing in my way wheat and barley fields ready for the sickle, which were sown in September or October of last year, (1855). In noticing the growth and condition of these grains growing on the ground, I soon arrived at the conclusion that *Ceres*, the guardian of corn or grain, had not of late years extended her care over this once most fertile region; for no forethought seemed to have been exercised in the endeavor to retain in the soil, its natural fecundity. Now and then I passed places where my guide would exclaim: *Cuida, Cuida, amigo mio, mira, mira, aca, allá!* and that too, with a loud voice.

I must confess that, when I looked into the gulches

many times on each side of the road, as I passed along, seeing that they were from twenty to thirty feet deep, I thought them fit habitations for *ladrones*. Sometimes I rode forward in this disagreeable suspense between an instant attack and defence, and that of life or death, not daring to turn back for fear that it might indicate a want of courage; therefore, I pushed on, and soon found myself descending a slight declivity towards a beautiful concave surface, where stood, in self-respect and in self-confidence, la Fabrica de Algodon de Escoba, with its neat residences, well-arranged outbuildings and comely church. As near as I could observe these from their present appearances, they were constructed out of soft-burnt bricks, plastered on both sides, and also white-washed with a finished degree of neatness, possessing one story in height, and usually thick walls. They were appropriated severally to the Superintendent with his family, and also to the numerous operatives attached to the establishment. Here, by Señor Lowerie and famlly I received a most cordial welcome, and felt rescued from the almost imminent danger attending the travel of this road. After a wash and tasteful repast, we, in accordance with the custom of the country, poured from the liquid urn, an oblation in remembrance of our father-land; then we turned our conversation in the current where our minds had been lately most excited, for near here, two days previous, two *ladrones* had been killed. In a moment I related my excited suspicions as to the safety of traveling in this region, and what I had undergone in mind on my way out. He confirmed what I had heard and said; then he mentioned an instance of his intending to go to the city only a short period prior to this, and an attack on him by a party of *ladrones*, not far from his residence, who, having robbed him of a gold watch, his purse, horse and pistols, tumbled him into one of those deep gulches,

which they told him he must not leave on pain of death, nor speak aloud, till dark, for there were several others robbed and nestled down in the gulch who had been as *kindly cared for* as himself. When night had rolled her sable mantle with silver locks sometimes apparent over the overt acts of man, Señor Lowerie carefully wound his lonely way up the precipitous ascent, where he had been hurled by the marauding vultures, and worked himself home, much bruised and severely dealt with.

That time his revolvers missed fire, and he suffered the penalty of carelessness. After this interview, he informed me that he had been in the country near fifteen years, and comparatively raised his family of children here, consisting of several sons and one daughter. Though most of his sons had been sent to the United States to receive the advantages of an education, yet his wife could not persuade herself to spare their daughter, as she is the only one, and so much an associate for her mother, especially when Señor Lowerie had necessarily to attend to the requirements of the Factory.

The residence is commodious, consisting of several apartments, the height of twelve feet between the joists, of large and strong doors and windows, though the latter have iron rods on the outside with glass *sashed* and *placed* within, which combine defence with neatness. The style of architecture observed in this dwelling, reminded me of a mixed order, derived from those nations, who had years ago, made Spain the theatre of war, the pride of ambition. Therefore, you can see here borrowed, a little of the modern Spanish, Moorish with the Arabian, the Gothic, and the Composite. I could but admire the basement, the walls, the pedestals, the columns, the arches, the entablature, the piedments, and the neatly terraced roof, with a small parapet, raised as if for protection. On the south side are the

outhouses adjoining, with a small garden of fruit-bearing trees, composed of apple, peach, plum, cherry and pear, with a small variety of tropical plants and fruit trees. Surrounding this plot, there is a wall near fifteen feet high, and over the surface of the ground, there pours a beautiful yet small rill, which animates the verdure, the plants and trees within, shedding a delightful and cooling influence. On the east and north sides de la casa, is situated the flower and pleasure ground, including plants, flowers, shrubs and trees, ornamental and elevating! They consist mostly, or rather in part, of pinks of different kinds, tulips, marigolds, lilies, daisies, hyacinths, rosemaries, varied rose bushes both in pots and otherwise, the pride of India, the juniper, the banian, the acacia, the holly, the locust, the Norwegian pine, and the cedar of Tyria, together with many others; and these are all trained or cared for by the gentle, yet directing voice of Señorita Lowerie, an American lady of refined taste and bland accomplishments. On the north, and near the house or main residence, there is a crystal fountain sending its limpid spray high up into the air, which descends, as if by natural distillation, to cheer and enliven the varied growth from different climes. On the west, there is *una plaza* or a park, composed of five acres, adorned with a fountain near the centre, and with shade and orange trees promiscuously set out, also with a variety of rose bushes and shrubs, beautifully adjusted in the plots between.

There is a promenade around *esta plaza*, with octangular walks converging to the center, where many trees and shrubs wave to the wind; and besides, to add to the comfort and a charm to home, there is a row of brick seats made after the manner of those at Mazatlan, encircling the whole square, except one bench left out near the front of the house, that the view, en masse, may not be interrupted

either low or high. On the north, south and west sides *de esta plaza*, there is a row of houses for the occupation of the Factory operatives, where they all seemed to be comfortably provided, with reference to a free circulation of air, to pleasure, sustenance, education and religion. Still further on westwardly, amigo mio, you may pass with me into another square, surrounded by the houses of the operatives, with a neat little chapel in the center, where sins are forgiven by a fatherly soul coming out from the city; and the devout of heart are prayed for, yet, with small *expectancies*. Passing through this, and a narrow lane, I arrived, in company with Señorita Lowerie and one of her brothers, at the gate leading into the spacious and highly ornamented grounds of Señor Olassagara, where he spends a part of his time, and where some member of his family is mostly ever present. The area of his pleasure and orchard grounds extends over three hundred acres, and one-third of it is laid out with taste and elegance, combining the useful and ornamental. La casa principal sets back at least five hundred feet from the stone wall at the entrance gate, and between this and the house, there is an alley twenty feet wide, ornamented on either side with shade and fruit trees, with here and there a flowering shrub, to add variety and unique beauty to the scene in front and around whithersoever you turn your eye.

The house is of two stories high, large—at least eighty by eighty feet—in the form of four Ls half inverted, both in front and rear; and each of the recesses thus formed, is thirty feet long and fifteen feet wide. The base of the building is constructed of stone even to, or just above the level of the ground; however, the chief materials are soft burnt bricks. The stories are high between the joists; the walls are thick; the doors and windows are large, and the piers between them are narrow.

The recess in the front and rear of the house, is ornamented with fluted columns and two pilasters resting on pedestals, both in the lower and upper story, and extending in each case to the entablature which encircles the building. The style of architecture observed with regard to the columns, indicated the Corinthian order; though in the construction of other parts of this residence, I thought I could trace that of the Ionic. From the verandah, below and above, you enter a spacious hall—twenty feet wide, which admits of a free circulation of the air, there being doors at each end; still the lower verandah also leads into spacious vestibules on either side of the hall door, which are finished and furnished with taste and elegance. Balustrades between the lower and upper columns are added to increase the massive grandeur of the style. The outside and the columns are plastered with a hydraulic cement; and then the outer surface of the building is clouded and penciled in imitation of Cerulian marble, cut into oblong squares. The inside surface is finished with the well known plaster of Paris. The several apartments, in respect to woodwork, are neatly finished with a fragrant cedar, somewhat resembling the California redwood. This cedar, being so impregnated with its natural rich perfume, that it imparts its balmy odor, combining with it, when one is housed in a room where it abounds, a most cordial and thankful welcome. The roof is terraced, with a parapet wall near three feet high; and for each apartment there ascends a chimney six feet high above the terrace, and in this respect *la casa* much resembles the architecture of other countries. So far as I could observe with propriety, I noticed that the apartments, both below and above, were furnished in an appropriate degree to the establishment, receiving the stores of many a foreign country to contribute to a refined and cultivated taste.

The pleasure and fruit ground, being divided into appropriate and suitable compartments and plots, contributes much to the pleasure of the scenery, and a residence at Escoba. From a distance there flows a crystal stream that gently ripples over this pleasure ground, feeding the misty fountains and the verdant, lovely aspect around. The promenades, walks and alleys, are laid out in tasteful curves; however, some are with straight lines, yet all converging to join a circular walk around the terrace, encircling this mansion. This terrace, near two feet above the level of the ground, is beautifully ornamented with tesselated pavement, and that too, in such a manner, as to imitate colors and gradations of painting.

The promenades and alleys are fringed with grasses, kept green and shorn of their rapid growth, as the occasion and taste may dictate. On the plots of a curved, a square, a triangular, a rectangular, and an octangular shape, I saw promiscuously, yet with thought and elegance, rare collections arranged of plants, flowers, shrubs, shade and fruit trees, mostly in bloom, uniting in one general assemblage those of the three zones, and presenting to the eye their peculiar characteristics, with all their varied shades and aspects of beauty, of which the mind can reasonably conceive. Señor Olassagara has spared no pains in importing foreign fruit trees from the best nurseries in the States of New York and New Jersey; and they all appeared to be doing well, having borne some fruit far surpassing any of the native of a similar class, both in point of size, flavor and beauty. The two-thirds of this ground are appropriated to the growth of the Lebanon cedar; the seeds having been sown promiscuously a few years since. Many of the young trees are now from ten to fifteen feet high, and will very soon requite the labor bestowed, in their convenient application to agricultural and mechanical requirements.

La Fábrica de Algodon, is situated about three hundred feet northeastwardly of the residence of Señor Lowerie, is large and commodious, being two hundred feet long, by eighty wide, and consisting of two stories in height. The wall is thick, and the piers narrow, abounding with glass windows and heavy doors, admitting however of free ventilation, besides many ventiducts, promoting thereby, healthful apartments for the operatives. The roof is terraced, with a parapet extending four feet above its surface, on a line with the wall, and of the same thickness. In fact the roofs of most of the buildings here resemble a fortification. All the appurtenances requisite to perpetuate the movements of this factory, have their several apartments assigned to them, with commendable order and arrangement; and also *skillful* mechanics, together with an experienced machinist. It is propelled by water-power, consisting of a wheel thirty-eight feet in diameter, made of wood; this runs one hundred looms through the year, with all the other requisites appertaining to the factory.

The German commercial houses of the city of Guadalajara, largely import cotton stuffs; however, the prices of the home stuffs manufactured at all the factories, which have come under my observation in the country, average twenty-five cents per yard, yet sometimes more or less, depending upon the quantity in the market, the tariff on such stuffs, and the quality of the home manufactures. Some of the raw cotton is grown in the country, but nearer the coast; although a considerable quantum of the amount manufactured, and that of the finest and cleanest qualities, is imported from New Orleans by the way of Tampico, on the Gulf of Mexico, and packed on mules across the country, in bales of one hundred and fifty pounds weight each,—two making a mule-load. Notwithstanding, I must not omit to

mention that these factories receive large importations of fine cotton also, from Peru in South America.

When conversing with Señor Olassagara with reference to the culture of cotton in the low, as well as in many of the high altitudes of this country, he seemed to think it wholly practicable, with the exception of the want of fixed or available labor at one's will. This year, I understand that it is his intention to plant one thousand acres of cotton near Lake Chapala, in company with a wealthy Mexican, owning *una hacienda fertil allá*, as well adapted to the growth of cotton, and possessing as fine and as long a staple, as the sea-island cotton grown on the eastern coast of the United States. This *enterprise* succeeding, will be of the utmost importanee in advancing the prosperity of the cotton manufacturing interests in this region of country; for others will introduce cotton gins from the United States, and study the characteristics of cotton growing. All the cotton factories which I have yet seen in Mexico, are obliged to keep ahead one year's stock of the raw material, owing to the uncertainties attending its annual growth and maturity, from the defect of its cultivation or the season, and the adventures incurred by importing and packing it into the interior. That which is imported from New Orleans is worth, when delivered here, from twenty to thirty cents a pound, depending on the quality.

Having remained a few days under the cordial entertainment of Señor Lowerie and family; early in the morning, ere the marauding ladrones had awakened from the effects of their prowlings, horses were saddled for myself and servant, and taking a coyish repast of chocolate and cake, and bidding along and happy farewell to amigos mios, I mounted my horse, being well armed and attended. Passing along at a hurried pace, I *soon* bade adieu to the scen-

ery so beautiful and tasteful around la Escoba, and quickly made a safe retreat into the city of Guadalajara.

Adios,

Señor,

AGRICOLA.

CINCINNATUS.

LETTER XLII.

Description of the Valley of Guadalajara—Its Outline Scenery—San Pedro, a Fashionable Place of Resort—Famine in Mexico—Want of Internal Improvements—Carriages Let—Dress among the different Classes of the Community—Rio de Santiago—Zapopan—Pueblitos.

AMIGO MIO:—Having promised on my return to the city, that I would entertain you with a short description of some of the characteristics of the valley of Guadalajara, it is now my pleasure and time to absolve myself from that obligation, by an endeavor to a compliance. Its constitutional, or rather configurative shape, is grand and imposing. Measuring near ten leagues in diameter, with a seeming concave surface, yet rolling and broken in places; with hills, mountain ridges and peaks of various forms and heights, encircling it, as if nature, in her volcanic throes, had designed this a fortress, consisting, in apparent view, of main-works, out-works, and particular defences. Many of the mountain ridges and peaks, many of their declivities, gulches, valleys and plains, extending far out, I observed capped, flanked, based, and bottomed, with primitive, secondary, tertiary, volcanic, diluvial, and alluvial rocks, stones, and lava, with their concomitants, and *vice versa*, showing the lapse of hoary ages; slight indications and more distinct of organic

remains of animals previously existing; the scoria with lava recently erupted, or so late as not to have apparently decomposed; and stones and gravels formed and located by the attrition of water, and the momentum of mountain floods. Notwithstanding much of the uneven surface of the valley, and its being cut up by gulches; still, I noticed aside from the scenery just mentioned, that it abounded with picturesque landscapes of rare beauty. Its small mounds and undulating plains being studded with ranchos, haciendas, trees of various growths, though stunted, rills, streams and springs, and near by them, villas overleaping thought in beauty and luxuriance, gladden the heart, and animate the mind to a love and reverence of nature and art.

Within two leagues of the city, and on the main road to the city of Mexico, there is a small pueblo called San Pedro, bearing eastwardly. This is the fashionable resort, like Balston Spa, or Saratoga Springs, for many persons of leisure and wealth, to go and spend a while, especially, when the sickly season prevails. There, the mansions of the rich are beautifully and elegantly ornamented, equal to any I have described. I am not particularly aware of any epidemic prevailing in this city, or that it is common for such, nor of any diseases, such as fevers and the like, which are not the products of warm climates. Still in various altitudes, sometimes, from the scarcity of provisions, and the extreme indolence of the mass of the lower classes, famine, in many parts ensues, bringing in its train, its car-load of overwhelming evils, diseases, sickness and death. However, this might be measurably or wholly avoided by internal improvements to facilitate inland intercommunication.

Near la Plaza de Armas, there are ever in readiness for hire, city coaches, at least, between sunrise and sunset. *Their* charges are remarkably reasonable, being one-half

dollar per hour, or nearly three dollars per day. I discovered this a matter of great convenience, both to citizens and foreigners visiting Guadalajara. There is, as usual at such stands both in Mexico and the United States, much strife among the coachmen to get preferred by the person desiring to hire a coach; and this to a stranger becomes very annoying, and sometimes, even a curse to a seeming convenience. To prevent difficulties arising as to the time the hired coach is absent, there is a register's office near at hand, with a city officer to take charge of it, whose duty it is to record the name and number of the coach, at the time it leaves, giving also, such person a slip of paper with the rates of hire and the time of leaving; otherwise the coachmen might impose upon the public.

The manners of the upper class of citizens are easy and graceful, without ostentation, blended with courtesy and affability. Those of the lower class partake somewhat of their habits and occupations, seemingly, yielding to the old adage, "that those who are born with silver spoons in their mouths may keep them." The French style of dress is most observed, with the exception of wearing the low crowned and broad brimmed hats and *serapés* among gentlemen, though sometimes they wear short cloaks; and rebozos made of silk, and dark colored dresses among the ladies of the first class. The common laborers dress in cotton stuffs, made loose, and without regard to fashion, wearing broad brimmed straw hats, and rebozos made of cotton. Their dress is light and well adapted to a warm climate.

El Rio de Santiago, or the River of Santiago, rises in the Western Slope of the Mexican Cordillera, and passes the city of Guadalajara six leagues distant, at a point called Puente Grande de Tololotlan, which means the large bridge of Tololotlan. Much of the intervening tract of

country is broken into deep gulches; and the river, as far as I could observe, seemed to pass through most unfathomable gorges or *barrancas* of more than two thousand feet deep. One of these I visited, going down *las barrancas* in a meandering manner fully two miles, and there I saw near the margin of the river, a low, narrow bench of land remarkably fertile, and well watered by springs, producing most of the known tropical fruits in perfection and abundance.

Six miles from the city on the road to Tepic, and upon a slight elevation sloping in either direction, there is a small settlement, called el Pueblo Pequeño de Zapopan, and ecclesiastically, our Lord of Zapopan; because of there being much devotion appropriated to it throughout this region of country! The population is computed to be eight hundred, with many mixed breeds and Indians, and among whom abound many ecclesiastical devotees, of the Franciscan order, who have here a convent, and also, a temple dedicated to the Virgin, with an image, upon which they bestow most devout veneration. Perhaps, to a stranger, 'tis fancy that paints the scene of man's usurped rights, when *he* beholds *him* in prostration to these Saints, the Altar and the Holy Stand. The style of architecture observed with reference to the construction of these ecclesiastical establishments, is truly grand and imposing, tending to awaken and excite the mind to solemn contemplation, and combining the chaste proportions of the modern Gothic order.

Pueblitos signify small settlements, or *pueblos pequeños*, and are situated about six miles north-westwardly of the city of Guadalajara. Between this and the former, the country is undulating, and in many places, it is cut many feet deep by tropical rains, which pour and sweep over this region with great impetuosity. *El Puente Grande sobre*

el rio de Atemejac, is near mid-way between these two places, a description of which I have already mentioned.

The population of *estos pueblos* is near eight hundred, and much mixed. Here I noticed a church, convent and monastery, which seemed to have required much care and design in the architectural arrangements of their construction, and in the compartments within the inclosure of the two latter edifices. These buildings are massive, imposing, and tending to excite and impress thought, perhaps, into the *mysterious works of man*, to *lead* the *blind;* and in their mechanical touches, resemble much the modern Gothic order of architecture. All other buildings besides, are of a miserable construction, showing the concentration of wealth to exist in the holy hands of God's vicegerents, shrewd financiers and pious imposters upon justice, sense, reason and judgment! Official Mediators!

Adios,

Señor,

AGRICOLA.

CINCINNATUS.

LETTER XLIII.

Intention to leave for Colima—Preparation therefor—Exchanges—Gloom of Night Traveling—Configuration of the Country—Scenery—La Villa de Zacoalco de Torres—Its Population—Description thereof—Sayula Mountains—Cuidad de Sayula—Sayula Range—Pine Lumber—Bees—Fabrica de Papel—Flour Mills—Maize—Shepherd Dog—Description of Sayula—Architecture—City of Zapotlan—Population—Las Plazas—La Fonda—Noted for a Siege, taken and sacked by Gen. Comonfort, in July, 1855—Comonfort censured.

AMIGO MIO:—Contemplating while in the city of Guadalajara, a return to California, and knowing that the Nicaragua line of Steamers were in the habit of touching at the port of Manzanillo once a month, on their upward trips to San Francisco, I decided to return to the coast by the way of Sayula Zapotlan and Colima, so as to unfold to my mind, new interests and new scenery. From Guadalajara to Zapotlan, there is a Troy coach plying every other day, except Sunday, as stage traveling upon this day, is generally excepted on the western portions of the Mexican Cordillera. Making up my mind to leave on a certain day, I prepared myself for the occasion, by seeing that my fire-arms were in a good condition, and taking a draft on Colima, not daring to take with me more than enough to bear my current expenses. And this is the manner of precaution which I would recommend to all foreigners desiring to visit and travel in Mexico, with any degree of

pleasure or safety. Commercial houses residing in the different cities of the Republic, most generally confer this accommodation and apparent security with a slight charge, as exchanges and commercial intercourse are mutually kept up throughout the whole country.

Having got myself ready, I repaired to the stage office and secured a seat, paying fifteen dollars, the distance being one hundred and twenty miles in a south-westerly direction. The hour of one o'clock, A. M., was set for our departure, and with this in view I repaired to my room that I might nap till twelve o'clock, and then be rested and ready in time to meet the appointed hour and the coming events of a fresh day. The hour had arrived on our having taken chocolate and a luncheon, when we were all ready for departure. Most of the stage passengers were Mexican ladies, composed of a few members of distinct families, who engaged their seats to go to Sayula, distant from this city one hundred and five miles; however, there was one Mexican gentleman who continued in the stage as far as Zapotlan.

That hour was starlight, and the milky-way had scarcely appeared to emit her soft combination of a silvery flood in our focal range; therefore, there was a deep gloom I felt in this departure, uncommon for me to experience in this country. I was aware of ladrones living in the city and watching the movements of all strangers, and in fact, of all travelers; and that this stage road was notorious *para ladrones;* moreover, I was aware that of late, travelers on this road had been made to feel the scourging rod of their marauding feats; hence, arose my precaution and fear that all might not be right in this excursion.

All being ready and comfortably seated, we departed through the dusky streets, pressing the steeds, six in number, to accelerate their speed; there being more danger at first,

than after we had departed far from the city. As far as the eye might extend at night, I saw a little at first, to obstruct the penetration of my vision, but shortly, descending scuds, misty in form, which seemed to be hovering over the landscape, and imparting a chilly freshness, causing one to draw closer around himself the garments of hoary winter. Continuing our journey onward through this chilly temperature at so late an hour of the night, we passed over an undulating surface at first, apparently productive, though sparsely wooded; and in the travel of some twenty miles, we struck a region much broken, still mounds, hills and mountains abounding on the right or left, in front or rear; however, there seemed to be a pass open. Notwithstanding, at times, we came into small valleys, and skirted fertile plains where lived some species of the human family upon ranchos and haciendas, with their herds and flocks around them, cultivating beans, maize, plantains, bananas, and various vegetables common to the country.

In the distance of every tenth mile, it was the design of the Zapotlan Stage Company to have stations, when first organized, in order to receive a relay of fresh mules, and then proceed with rapidity. From having passed over the road, I should imagine that the Company had effected these ends in regulating their relays, as near as practicable.

Bending our course on, and passing all suspected danger without interruption; nothing of moment reminded me that I was traveling through a region much different from what I had seen, till I arrived at la Villa de Zacoalco de Torres, distant about fifty-four miles from Guadalajara. Although the district of country we had passed, abounded in springs and streams, which seemed sufficient for agricultural purposes, and also, in stones and rocks for fencing; still, I noticed but a few squads of trees dispersed here and there, serving the husbandmen for fuel and stakes. The

whole of this distance presented nearly the same geological features as I have heretofore mentioned as to other parts, showing frequently, the different formations intermixed, still, lines of distinction between them. Near the road, I saw no extensive improvements, nor villages worthy of your consideration; therefore, I will draw your attention to la Fonda de Zacoalco, situated on la plaza publica.

When we arrived, the clock had struck ten, A. M., and as soon as practicable, we were prepared for breakfast. This consisted of beef-steak, broiled chickens, eggs, fried bananas, frijoles, carné con Chile Colorado with onions, bread, tortillas, chocolate, and milk to drink. The price of this was one-half dollar; and by the day, one dollar and a-half, and by the week, from four to five dollars; still, by becoming acquainted, one could live as cheap in Mexico as in any part of the United States. The figure of this region is quite picturesque; the valley of Zacoalco being surrounded by high mountains, and the surface mostly level or gently undulating. The productions here from what I could see, though this being the dry season of the year, would assimilate themselves much to the classes priorly mentioned in these letters, as growing in the temperate regions, that is, tierras templadas de Mejico.

The population de esta Villa is computed to be not far from four thousand. Of course, the population here is mixed as usual, presenting a variety of characters to deal with; though, generally pliable, if cautiously approached. It is regularly laid out, the streets crossing each other at right angles, with a public sqbare or la plaza publica in the center, ornamented with a fountain, which rises from a stream watering the town, and also, with orange trees, and surrounded by buildings of a public and private character; consisting of a church, the Alcalde's office, Hall of Audience, la Fonda, private residences, and stores and shops

where one could see exposed for sale, foreign fabrics and stuffs, with home-made manufactures, and trinkets also, to please the Indians.

Receiving our relay of mules six in number, we traveled on, meeting with no particular exhibitions of nature, nor of art, nor of improvements to excite our curiosity, except to casually note the passing scenes of hills, mounds, mountain ranges and peaks, with their rocky declivities, and here and there, with thin clusters of trees of various growths, though mostly oak; till our arrival in the afternoon, and that at a late hour, at la ciudad de Sayula, one hundred and five miles from Guadalajara. Las ranchos and las haciendas seemed some distance apart; still, they animated the mind, wherever one could behold springs and streams of water. It was in April, and the heat of the sun at mid-day was intense, increased by the concentration of his rays in small valleys; and, in many places, I should think this effect produced by the salinish character of the country; for within the distance mentioned, I observed many salt ponds near the road, where some salt is made; however, not to any extent.

The city of Sayula is situated in a singularly picturesque valley, not far from the base of the Sayula mountain range, which abounds in pines and cedars, presenting a beautiful and striking contrrst to the dry and parched valley far below. This range of mountains is well adapted to saw-mills, from the springs and streams which rise in it, and there are several which not only supply the adjacent country with lumber, but the city of Guadalajara. It is also said to abound in wild bees, which, I was here informed, are quite common in high altitudes, that is, from three thousand to seven thousand feet above the sea, throughout the Republic.

Upon a mountain stream called Sayula, which also sup-

plies the city with water for domestic use, and that of irrigation, is situated *la Fabrica de Papel de Sayula*, owned by a Mexican company, and superintended by Americans. Its characteristics much resemble *la Fabrica de Papel de Atemejac*, near the city of Guadalajara; except the water-wheel, which is made of wood. The rags for these factories are obtained mostly in Mexico; though of late, the companies have at each factory sent to foreign countries to get supplies of some qualities, which do not abound at home. The stock invested in these factories is said to pay well, at least, twenty per cent. each year, free from all disbursements. On this stream there is also a flouring mill, but the quality of the flour is indifferent, owing to the stones not being kept in order, and having a poor bolt. Throughout the country, I neither heard of, nor observed many horse-mills for grinding corn or wheat; but the usual mode on ranchos and haciendas is to grind the grain between two stones, one large and hollowed out, and the other small, rounded, and easily handled. Before the grain is ground in this manner, it is common for it to be soaked awhile in lime-water, that it may become easily hulled, and fitted for use. This custom, in Mexico, is an instance of a *heritage* descended from the Aztecs; and it will probably, ever exist, or at least, as long as so large a majority of the population is characteristic of Indian blood.

The valley of Sayula presents the ever agreeable aspect of much fertility; the mountains on either side extending out near the city, which gives it rather the form of an ellipsis, being narrower near the entrance and departure to and from it. Maize seems to be the staple production; still a variety is produced here, as different altitudes are easily attained. It is dotted with ranchos and haciendas, which, as if of the ancient patriarchs, have around them their flocks and herds. Through this region I noticed with

satisfaction and admiration, the great utility of the shepherd dog; he seemed only to want language to express his conceptions or act the human part; for he was as watchful of his flock, as the eagle of his prey.

The city of Sayula is neatly laid out, having a beautiful public square, ornamented and surrounded in the same manner as that at *Zacoalco*. The streets cross each other at right angles, and are paved in the same manner as usual in Mexican cities. The style of architecture observed here, as in other Mexican cities, with reference to private residences, borders more upon the Moorish order than any other which suggested itself to my mind, when observing them; although the church is mostly constructed with a view to imitate the modern Gothic.

Leaving this city at a late hour in the afternoon, it was somewhat dark ere we had arrived at la ciudad de Zapotlan. The configuration of this intervening tract presented no new nor peculiar characteristics which I have not described as being common to altitudes of two, and even three thousand feet above the level of the sea, and to latitudes twenty, twenty-one and twenty-two degrees north. After passing a tedious and lonely road, and after darkness had shut in for more than an hour, we safely arrived at la Fonda de Zapotlan, fifteen miles from Sayula. The city of Zapotlan is computed to possess a population of near eighteen thousand, and from conversation with an intelligent native there, and from my own observation while in the city, I should set down eleven-twelfths of the whole as having sprung from the mixed races, showing in bold relief, the Shemite and Hamite blood, with a slight tinge of the Castilian. This city is situated in a valley remarkably fertile, and unique for its mountain scenery, being not far from the volcano of Colima and that of Nieve, which here, present their lofty and proud peaks clearly to view. This

city is laid out with much regard to regularity; the streets mostly crossing each other at right angles as at Sayula; these and the side-walks are paved in the same manner as in other Mexican cities already mentioned. However, the streets are far too narrow for a large commercial metropolis, susceptible of being approached by navigation.

There are two public squares or *dos plazas publicas*, near the center of the city, and in the smaller one of which there is a reservoir for supplying *los ciudadenos* with water, and it is fed by a small stream turned from its regular course, not far off. Both of these squares are ornamented with orange trees set in rows twenty feet apart, along the promenades and alleys, which encircle and divide them into eight plots, converging to the center, which are tastefully arranged and ornamented with trees also. These walks are overlaid with small gravels procured near by, though with flag-stones in the center of each square. One contains an area of two and the other of five acres. Fronting these, there are stores; shops of various kinds; a hotel, la Fonda de Zapotlan; and coffee and chocolate retreats; and on the north side of the large square, there stands a single edifice, where many are wont to go, and bend, at the return of each early morn, on their child-taught knees, in the seeming presence of the Holy Virgin and the Disciples.

With reference to the construction of this church, I saw nothing which would distinguish it from others already mentioned; however, it seemed appropriate and suitable to the wants of a quiet inland town. This church looked aged and indicated on its sides an undeniable evidence of a fearful convulsion having taken place, which may have been radiated from the volcano of Colima, so near, and from its height, apparently hovering over the consecrated spot.

In the rear and northwest of the city, there stands a

mound near five hundred feet high, now proud in shape, overlooking the valley of Zapotlan, and far up the rocky sides of volcanic Colima. In July of last year, (1855) this became noted in the pages of Mexican history, as being the stronghold where General Comonfort planted his artillery to cannonade and storm the town, in case of not an immediate surrender of the Santa Anna party. This party having fortified themselves in trenches and behind redoubts, as though out of danger, and also, behind stone buildings, could not be persuaded to believe that the new recruits of Indians under Comonfort, would be able to level their pieces so as to touch them; therefore, they were determined not to relinquish their position till forced at the points of bayonets. A few rounds of canister and ball, soon convinced them to the contrary; and the city force being small, were quickly overcome by the enemy, numbering several thousands, which had been gathered unto him, like a snow ball set in motion, down a moderately steep declivity. On account of the determined resistance of this city to the forces of Gen. Comonfort, it was, when taken, given up to be sacked for two hours by his soldiers, without any restraint, which he promised them, at the commencement of the siege, in case of much delay to surrender, that he might thereby infuse them with ready and quick action, and with determined zeal for his cause; although this determination on his part, he had communicated to the citizens, prior to their being overcome and forced to fly to their court-yard gates, which are a mere shell in form of a barrier against canister and musket balls. In this engagement, many lives were lost on both sides, but more on the defensive than the offensive; and many of the stores and private residences were pierced by balls, dismantled, and sacked of all their valuables. For this act of cruelty and warfare towards the citizens of Zapotlan, Gen. Comonfort has been much censured in his own

country, and perhaps, it may carry with it the external aspect of an unnecessary infliction; but before the pen, for this act, has shrouded his name in black, and deigns to transmit it to after ages, it may be well to enquire: "what were his forces? how were they related to him, except by sanguinary exploits and heroic deeds, and large expectations? how had he created them? how could he move them and retain them in his interest and reformation? and finally, who were his opponents? how had they treated reforms for the public good since coming into power? and what had they apparently done to promote public peace and prosperity in the country for more than twenty years past!" After this, Gen. Comonfort, in the rapid strides of his march, met with little or no opposition in the western portion of the Mexican Republic. Colima, and Guadalajara, as with other strongholds, fell into his hands, as if by natural impulse.

Adios,

Señor,

AGRICOLA.

CINCINNATUS.

LETTER XLIV.

Productions of the Valley of Zapotlan—Volcano de Colima—Departure for Colima on Muleback—Trail - Post Master of Colima traveled with—Country Aspect—Bright Morning—Plateau at the southeast Base of Mount Colima - Conception of it—Productions—Volcanic Matter - Breakfast—La Garita de el Gobierno—El Plan de La Barranca sobre el Camino de Colima Its Characteristics—Hacienda de el Plan de La Barranca, a Sugar Estate—Description of, and Machinery—Dinner—Sleep—Starlight—Departure - Tonila - Description of—Many Sugar Estates—Hacienda de Loma Alla—Quality of the Rice—Country adapted to Agriculture—Country Configuration.

AMIGO MIO :—The productions of the valley of Zapotlan are similar to those of Sayula; though I am under the impression that more sugar-cane is cultivated here; still the advantages for irrigation, I should suppose, to be nearly the same. The manners, habits, aud customs of the citizens and the country people, and their dress, living, and style of architecture, reminded me of what I had already seen. The distance from this city to that of Colima, in a direct line is near forty miles; but the volcano of Colima, with its numerous ridges and gulches occupies such a position as to make it a circuit of eighty miles. This volcano will engage my pen for a while when I shall have arrived at Colima, and shall be considering the picturesque scenery of that valley.

Having traveled to the end of the stage road in this direction, there being not a sufficient travel or energy to continue it on to Colima, I found it necessary to engage a servant with three mules to take my baggage, and accompany me to the city of Colima.

Being all ready on a beautiful morning in April, my baggage having been packed on one mule, and my servant on another, I surmounted the third, and bidding adieu to the city of Zapotlan at three o'clock, A. M., we departed, skirting the base of the volcano somewhat in the form of a half circle. Before I had traveled many miles, I fell in with a Mexican gentleman, his son, and servants, all well mounted and armed, and also, bound for Colima, whom I accompanied thus far, and whom I found, after my arrival, to be the postmaster of that place. He appeared, as I became casually acquainted with him, to possess in an eminent degree those bland and courteous characteristics, which single out well-bred Mexicans. I understood him to be a native of Guadalajara, but that he had lived many years in Colima, called *tierra caliente*, by the natives. He possessed a fund of information and was liberal in its distribution, when interrogated, and seemed desirous of knowing much of the peculiarities, productions, and settlements of California, and the United States generally.

We traveled on till ten o'clock, when we arrived at a mountain rancho in a deep glen or apparent gorge; here we alighted and put up for three hours and took breakfast. The base of the volcano was on our right, and appeared broken into many ridges and deep ravines, however, in places, fringed with a scrubby growth of various kinds of oaks; while bench and valley lands, still of a small level surface, stretched along under our feet, and extended far to the left. The mountain ranges through this region, had the aspect of newer formations than any I had as yet witnessed;

scoria abounding, and lava broken into fragments, commensurate with any notions of geometrical measurements. Never did I behold a country before, presenting so generally the *marks* and *signs* of having been once volcanic; for thousands of seeming, yet small craters, attracted our attention, hollowed out to our view, as if by intense heat and the action of gaseous substances far embosomed.

This morning being bright, my spirits elastic, and riding along leisurely, I gave myself up to the contemplation of the volcanic chain of mountains, beginning in latitude forty-six degrees south, in South America, and traveling somewhat ridged in form, till its arrival in latitude eighteen degrees north, in North America, where I discovered it, in tracing its characteristics, prolonged in a great plateau, until it reaches the twenty-second degree. There is no doubt in my mind from the view which I was able to make of this present consideration, but that the plateau, in part, owes its existing form to the circumstance of an ancient system of valleys, in a chain of primitive mountains, having been filled up, to the depth of many thousand feet, with various volcanic products; as earth and alkalies mixed, and ejected in intense ignition.

The agricultural productions of this region of country, wherever susceptible of improvements and cultivation, possess the same characteristics as about Zapotlan and Sayula; maize, beans or frijoles, and sugar-cane, prevailing. Moreover, some portions of it abounded with flocks and herds, roaming on the hills and mountain sides. The cooling springs and streams we occasionally passed, lent a charm to the seeming solitude and grandeur of hoary ages, now and then rising to checker our vision.

Here, as in Chile, volcanic matter must have, from external indications, burst through the primitive formation of rocks, and spread its liquid combinations over fields abound-

ing in luxurious verdure, leaving many a projection and peak, yet to be seen.

Having breakfasted on bread, chocolate, eggs, chickens, frijoles, tortillas, and caré con chile colorado, and couched awhile to rest our wearied limbs, we had our mules re-packed and re-saddled, and on we went, taking a birds-eye view of the small valley we were then in, which and the tract we had to pass through till our arrival at *el plan de Barranca*, twenty miles distant, assimilated very much with what we had observed twenty miles in the rear of us. Upon a small ridge of table land, after having traveled along near ten miles, we arrived at *la Garita* of the Government, where we found it necessary to pay two reales, which I understood were to be used in repairing and improving the trail. This contribution laid upon the traveling and packing community, though small, is a common usage in Mexico, between large commercial cities and the ports; and in the course of a year, at esta Garita, it must amount to several thousands of dollars, and I should judge for myself, that but little of it went to improve the trail. Este Plan de Barranca is the outer edge of a deep glen or cañada about two thousand feet descending; both down and up it, there is a trail, for one or two miles, paved with cobble stones, and protected by a wall three feet high, laid in cement. This labor, I was informed, had been performed by the Spaniards while in possession of the country. So well constructed and adapted with sewers and side passages to turn the tropical rains off, that it stands the lapse of time without showing many evident marks of abrading or deterioration. On rising this gulch, it was sunset, and in one fourth of a mile, we reached an extensive sugar estate, where we all rode into a spacious court-yard, alighted from our mules, and put up till three o'clock the next morning. Esta Hacienda de el Plan de Barranca, is situated on a

declivity, somewhat resembling a broad spur of the volcano; although I discovered it to be considerably broken, yet remarkably productive, maturing sugar cane so as to cut from eight to ten feet long in one year, and averaging nearly two inches in diameter, and possessed of a saccharine matter, resembling the consistency of honey-dew. It is on, and to the right of the trail mostly, as we were traveling to Colima. The proprietor lives in the city of Durango, and visits this place perhaps once a year; however, he has a superintendent to take charge of all his affairs and appurtenances belonging to the estate.

The residence is on the Colima and Guadalajara trail, and consists of a building made of adobes and plastered with a cement on both sides; being one story high, one hundred feet long by eighty wide, having in the center, a spacious court-yard, and within, a portico all around; and on the outside, a portico in front of the house. The walls had the appearance of being three feet thick, and the roof of being terraced and covered with cement. This building is adapted to a family residence, the use of servants, the public travel, the storing of grain and produce generally, work-shops, and in the northeast corner of it, fronting the trail, there is a small store for the accommodation of the operatives on the hacienda, numbering not far from six hundred. The sugar-house I did not see, as it is situated one mile from the residence.

Several years since, the proprietor sent to the United States and imported a complete apparatus for making sugar on the improved system, as practiced in Louisiana; but I was most lamentably informed here, that owing to there being no foundry or machinists in this region of country, understanding it, nor the keeping of it in repair, nor those principles which should govern its application, he had been, after repeated efforts, and sinking near one hundred

thousand dollars in various losses, forced to abandon it and have resource to the old system, perhaps in use by the Chinese three thousand years ago or at the present, or among the Arabians at the close of the thirteenth century, when the sugar cane was first introduced into Arabia from China. This old system is in general use throughout the Republic; and perhaps forty, yea, thirty years since, it may have been known among the Creoles of Louisiana; and even it may be practiced among some of them up to the present time.

The hour of our departure came, as we had been awakened by the noise of our servants in getting ready; and footing our bills, being a dollar each for dinner and lodging, we soon bade adieu to the fair environs of *el plan de Barranca*, and many a mile we rode along, ere twilight had won her course in the east.

The distance from *el plan de Barranca* to the city of Colima, is considered forty miles, and the most of this tract of country seemed to flatten and widen out, presenting *muchos ranchos y haciendas* to either the right or the left, abounding with streams and springs of water farther up the mountain; with horses, mules, cattle, sheep and hogs; with sugar-cane, maize, and rice fields; and also, with groves of orange trees, plantains and bananas, and the different species of custard apple. These seemed to be the characteristics of the country, till our arrival at Colima; although I do not wish to convey the impression that these even sparse settlements indicated anything like what the country might be compared to, were its constitutional laws and political regulations, such as to guarantee firmness and safety in the investment of capital. At six o'clock, we alighted by the trail side near a sugar-house, and called at the residence of the proprietor, where we were regaled thus early with a cup of chocolate and tortillas. Esta Hacienda is well watered and appeared to have a popula-

tion of three hundred, living near *un Pueblo pequeño*, called *Tonila*.

Traveling along, as we had before day-light, we discovered it to be the practice on the sugar estates, to work all night; and sometimes on Sundays, I was informed that they labored.

Tonila is situated near the base of the Volcano of Colima, commanding on either side a beautiful and highly fertile country, and about twenty-five miles northeast of the city of Colima. The surface of the country adjacent to this village; as well as the region around, is much broken, and in many places would seem to impress one with the conviction, that not centuries had elapsed since eruptions have taken place, and desolated many a happy spot; for volcanic rocks frequent the sight of the traveler on either side, in a half decomposed state.

The population, I should imagine, would not exceed two thousand, and from a glance at their features and countenances, appeared mixed as at other places which had fallen under my notice. While here, I noticed only a few good buildings, and a few stores or *las tiendas;* however, one church and *una fonda* drew from me a moment's attention, and left but an ordinary impression. Through este pueblo there ripples a crystal stream, serving the purpose of irrigation in the dry season, and exciting the yards, gardens and fields to smile, decked with a lovely green freshness, which charms the eye and pleases the senses.

Sugar-cane would seem to form the staple in this district of country, attaining a high degree of perfection, and yielding about three thousand pounds per acre annually; notwithstanding, cotton, rice, maize, and the rearing of stock, enter into the productions and pursuits, yet to a limited extent. Tropical fruits abound as elsewhere, with many of the same varieties, and arrive at perfection, maturing

into a rich mellowness, which warrants to the consumer a pleasure in the participation; though nurtured by a careless hand and an empty heart.

In this portion of the country, and in traveling along, we saw many sugar estates of a similar character to the one mentioned; but the population as I have frequently mentioned, is fully nine-tenths colored or mixed with Indian blood. At some of the sugar estates, the proprietors have it so arranged as to do the *rolling* and boiling within the buildings and under sheds. Most of the syrup, when ready to granulate, is turned into earthen jars with small holes perforated through the bottom, so as to admit of drainage. The sugars made in this region would bear no *relative* comparison to those of Louisiana, as the Mazatlan sugars would not, which I have alluded to already. The Roman plow, good among these people to supplant the improvements of the present age, still seemed to be in use; and in fact, most of the implements which would have naturally suggested themselves to man's necessities in the most primitive ages of human progression.

We dismounted about eleven o'clock, at la Hacienda de Loma Alla, the heat being intense. Here we had breakfast, which consisted of chickens, boiled eggs, tortillas, carné con Chile Colorado, and chocolate.

The quality of the rice grown at this estate, would favorably compare with the best quality of the South Carolina rice. The manner of separating the grain or kernel from the hull, observed here, and throughout the country, is, after having procured a block of a tree two feet in diameter and three feet long, and hollowed it out two feet deep by eighteen inches wide, to fill it half full of shelled rice and then pound it with a wooden pestle till the hull easily separates from the kernel; and after this, the chaff is winnowed out by exposing it to a draft of wind, which cleans it,

making it look beautifully. The rice grown in this region of country resembles the aquatic kind, which is cultivated by overflowing the land several times, after it is planted in rows. In cleaning it, great care is generally taken not to break the kernels, I should judge from its appearance in market.

The residence here with its capacities, resembles that de el *plan* de *Barranca*, where we had put up for the past night. This whole district of country bore the outward aspect of being well watered and admirably adapted to agriculture and grazing. The configuration of the country for the past forty miles, bore less evidences of being broken; still showing, however, different formations, incident to volcanic regions. The population at this estate, I understood, averaged nearly three hundred, and mixed as usual.

The hour for our departure having come, we remounted our mules and traveled forward at our leisure, and near five o'clock, P. M., we safely arrived in the city of Colima; where I put up for a few days at *la Fonda de Frances de Colima*; the proprietor being a Frenchman and a gentleman *tambien*, having some regard for himself and guests. In my next, I shall take a survey of the valley of Colima, and of what I hope to be of interest to you. Colima is nearly south of the city of Guadalajara.

Adios,

Señor,

AGRICOLA.

CINCINNATUS.

LETTER XLV.

Arrival at Colima—Fonda de Frances—Description of—Dinner—View of the City—Ride with Gov. Alvarez, of the Territory of Colima, to Visit an American, three miles distant—Señor Barney—Return—Visit to La Huerta de Gov. Alvarez at this time—Its Extent—Golden Fruit—Valley of Colima—Rio de Colima—Volcano of Colima—Description of—Its Crater—Extinct Crater—Indians about it—Indian Alcalde—Productions about this Volcano—City of Colima—Description of German Houses—Plaza—City Market—Churches—Stores—Architecture—German Merchants—Puento Grande—Population of the City—Fabricas de Algodon de Cayetaño y de Harmonia—Jesuit Buildings.

AMIGO MIO:—Having safely arrived and securely lodged myself within *la Fonda de Frances*, I was soon shown an apartment, being in the lower story and adapted to my comfort and convenience. The proprietor was attentive to my wants, having about himself servants enough to execute instant orders. Undergoing an ablution and a change of apparel, I contented myself to remain at the Hotel till morning, before going out to make observations, or to treat my reason with fresh aspects. The hotel is a one story building, constructed of soft-burnt bricks, and plastered on both sides with cement; having heavy doors and sash with glass for windows, yet gratings on the outside, and an ample court-yard ornamented with orange trees set in rows around it, and also in the center. The

walls are three feet thick, and the roof is terraced in the usual Mexican manner. The dining bell ringing through my ears, I seated myself at table quite alone this evening as to persons, but not as to good dishes, in the court-yard portico. This extends all around the house on the inside. This table was, while I remained at the hotel, as well supplied with the substantials and luxuries of life, as that at *la Fonda de Oro*, in Tepic. My dinner being over, I soon retired to rest, and discovered this night, and afterwards, the nights generally through the whole year, to be as warm here as in Louisiana during the summer season. In the morning I arose early and felt refreshed, for I slept with the window open, the grating serving as a *full protection.*

After breakfast, I walked out into the streets, taking with me a letter of introduction to Señor Alvarez, Governor and Commandante of the *Territory* of Colima, and Alcalde of the city. He received me cordially, and observed that in the evening, he would accompany me in his carriage to the residence of Señor Barney, an American, from the State of Massachusetts, three miles north of the city, and near *la Fabrica de Alyodon de Cagetaño.* During the day I sauntered about without an effort to note the passing or present scene; however, evening soon came, when the tide of heat had passed away, and I was ready to accept of the kind offer of the General.

Being seated in a Philadelphia coach, costing here two thousand dollars, with a span of mules beautifully caparisoned, costing one thousand more, the coachman, an adept in his business, drew up the *reins* and let *them roll* and prance through the streets, over the cobble stone pavement for some distance before we had come into the outskirts of the city. The road is nearly level and free from impediments; our course being up the river de Colima, and on our left was the river bottom divided into small plots or

huertas, abounding in all tropical luxuriance, and fascinating to the eye with its golden hues peering through many a verdant and glossy leaf; while on our right lay the table land, being a few feet higher and extending off many a mile, rich and productive, abounding in maize generally. Having arrived, we descended from the coach and entered the gate leading into the residence of Albert G. Barney, Esq.

After my introduction and short interview with him, making a promise to return the next day, we departed, the steeds bounding into their *trappings*, high with mettle, and returning by the way of the city, and passing over *el puerte grande de Colima*, which will shortly require my pen for a moment, we called at his garden or *huerta de suyo*, embracing an area of twenty acres, where I beheld the productions peculiar to this climate, growing in the greatest exuberance. In the center he has a spacious reservoir and bath house, from which he could irrigate his garden at his will.

The fruits and productions growing in this region, will require each a special notice in the turn I have contemplated to adjust them. The valley of Colima possesses a larger scope of productive land, and that too, adapted to the growths of hot climates, than any portion of the Republic, which I have noticed thus far in the extent of my Mexican travels. Apparently it is situated in a basin or concave surface, surrounded with mountain ridges, except on the south-east and north-west, and extending to the base of the volcano. It is computed to embrace the superficial area of one hundred square leagues of arable land, or near five hundred thousand acres, which could be made to grow produce enough in bananas to sustain double the present population of the whole Mexican Republic, were it cultivated to the extent of its capacity; for I have been

informed by gentlemeu of practicable judgment to discern and decide, that óne acre of bananas thus cultivated will afford ample sustenance for thirty persons one year, allowing each to consume two hundred pounds.

The valley generally carries with it a level, yet in some places, an undulating surface, and is quite abundantly watered by el rio de Colima, which rises in the volcano and flows southwardly. This serves to run la Fabricas de Algodon, one league north of the city, at a small village called San Cayetaño, and also, the purpose of general irrigation. It is not large, except in the rainy season, though it seldom or never dries up. The volcano of Colima, is situated twenty-five miles northeastwardly of the city, and bears in its active peculiarities that grandeur and sublimity which one conceives of the terrestrial vents, communicating with the central fires of the earth.

While here, I did not notice its discharging torrents of flame and sulphur,—nor torrents of melted matter; but now and then, as I arose early in the morning, I observed clouds of smoke and apparent ashes enveloping its cone in a shroud, and extending downward. Its altitude is computed to be not far from twelve thousand feet above the level of the sea, and consequently, it embraces the characteristics in point of climate, of the three zones; first the torrid, secondly the temperate, and thirdly the frigid. The growths at its base, and so on to its summit, bears evident illustrations of this position.

The crater of the volcano of Colima is near five hundred feet in diameter, with an orifice perpendicular; and about one league north of this, there is an extinct crater of an old volcano, the summit of which is frequently capped with snow, being twelve thousand seven hundred and thirteen feet above the ocean, and serves as a landmark near the port of Manzanillo, to guide the mariner.

When torrents of lava had rolled down this ancient volcano years ago, many eruptions seemed to have taken place; for on riding along by its base and casting my eye upon its side, I saw many fragments of lava, otherwise unaccounted for, of singular shapes and dimensions, seemingly broken up by an under current of this melted matter. About the base there are many settlements, and even up the sides, mixed as usual; although I was informed that there lived many tribes of Indians, possessing their peculiar and primitive traits of character, acknowledging a superior in the government, and themselves to be merely within the Christian pale; though secretly clinging to many of their ancient usages and customs with respect to religious concernments, most especially.

Many portions of the side of this mountain are vastly fertile, abounding in springs and streams, and yielding man just such a paradise to live in, as he might choose to throw around himself. These Indian settlements have Alcaldes appointed by the Governor of the Territory, and one of whom I saw at Señor Barney's on some private business, while I sojourned under his hospitable roof. He appeared like a man of consequence among his tribe, and bore in his facial contour the semblance of the Aztec race. His step was firm, yet elastic—his gait erect, yet not stiff; his voice clear, yet not arrogant; his eye penetrating, yet not unbedewable; his countenance sedate, yet not sad nor gloomy; and his gesticulations free and easy, and graceful. This is a son of the forest, around whose ancient home the brilliant bands of civilization, have shed their light for more than three hundred years!

The chief productions among these Indian settlements, are maize, rice, bananas, plantains and honey, with an abundance of stock of all kinds. The grass extends up the side of this mountain more than six thousand feet, grow-

ing luxuriantly through the year, and as high as a man's head on horseback. It also abounds in trees of various kinds; the size depending on the altitude. Its arable portions on its sides, are said to be remarkable to promote health and long life; for many of the Indians live to the good old age of more than one hundred years, and then they even seem active and healthy.

An American could easily frame in his own mind, from this slight description of the volcano, what might be made of its arable portions were it settled and cultivated as many parts of the United States.

The city of Colima appears noted, in a historical view, from having been founded by the "Great Captain," or the conqueror of Mexico,—CORTES himself, after his return from Spain, between the years 1522 and 1524. Zacatula, at the mouth of the Balsas river, on the coast in the State of Michoacan, was founded at the same time with Colima. The city of Colima is situated on the plain of Colima, in latitude north eighteen degrees, forty-five seconds, and longitude west from Greenwich one hundred and three degrees, twenty seconds, and eighty miles from the port of Manzanillo by the way of the trail; the lake of Cuyutlan making it half of a circle more than the distance otherwise would be. It is the metropolis of this territory, and the depot for merchandise in transitu to the vast interior. In this city there are four wholesale German houses, and one native wholesale and retail store, owned by the Governor, Alvarez. Each of these houses, I was informed, receives at least the importation of one cargo of foreign merchandise and liquors, in the course of a year, amounting to eight hundred tons burden. This city is laid out regularly, the streets crossing each other at right angles; however, they are narrow, and so are the sidewalks. The streets and sidewalks are paved in the same manner as other Mexi-

can cities having already fallen under my observations, and *la Plaza publica*, being near the centre, is ornamented in like manner. The public market of provisions and vegetables, is held on this square, embracing all the varieties I mentioned in that at Guadalajara, and a still greater variety of tropical productions, and fruits of a richer flavor and far more fragrant perfume. These I shall call your attention to again.

The Church fronts the Public Square on the northeast, is a new building, large, and well adapted to the wants of the citizens. Foreigners and the first class of Mexicans, attend church here as elsewhere I have mentioned in these letters. Fronting *la Plaza publica* on each side, there is a row of retail stores and shops, vending foreign merchandise, the home manufactures, and the agricultural productions of the country. The city abounds with mechánics peculiar to the wants and demands of the country in its present state. Hats, shoes, boots, clothing, and earthenware are extensively manufactured at this place for home use; but the fine cloth is imported.

In this city, one apothecary store fell within my notice, and three at Guadalajara; neither of which would compare with a second class drug store in San Francisco. No foreigner is allowed to sell drugs in the Republic, till he has been most rigidly examined before a board of physicians in the City of Mexico, which fact I presume must, without question, give rise to so few foreigners being engaged in that commercial line; nevertheless, in this country there is a strong prejudice exercised against foreign physicians. In comparison with other countries, I met with few professional gentlemen, except the clergymen, whom I found ever ready to meet me half way, to all appearance, affable, bland, courteous and far from endeavoring to mention their creeds when in social conversation.

The style of architecture observed with reference to the church, the residences and stores, would rather impress one with an effort to imitate the modern Gothic, and also, the Moorish order; and the court-yards of the latter, being ornamented with fountains, and trees of tropical growth, would seem to assimilate themselves to what I have so often noticed in Mexican cities.

The wholesale houses are situated promiscuously in different parts of the city. Most of the German merchants here, as at Guadalajara, Tepic and Mazatlan, appeared courteous, affable, and communicative generally, so far as in their power; however, I should infer from incidental intimations, that were American capitalists to come into Mexico and engage in commercial pursuits, there might be excited and engendered much jealousy and consequent ill-feeling. Though among them there would be some noble exceptions to this spirit, desirous to monopolise the trade of the country.

El puente grande sobre el rio de Colima, en esta Ciudad, that is, the great bridge over the Colima river in this city, is wholly constructed of rocks and stones of a small size, on arcades; the columns of the arches being eight feet apart, and the bridge eighty feet long. Each side is raised three feet higher than the surface of the bridge, yet sloping down from the center to each terminus; and against the walls inside is a continuous seat, made of stones and covered with bricks and cement, where, of a star-light night, the citizens love to wander and saunter away a few moments in the cool breeze, created by the mountain river.

The style of dress, both for ladies and gentlemen, and also the lower classes, resembles that at Guadalajara; although their apparels are made of a lighter material, I discovered, as the climate is much warmer.

The population is computed to be not far from thirty-

thousand, consisting of equally as many shades of color, if not more, than I had before noticed in my travels among the same number of Mexicans; the mixed and Indians would, from close observation, indicate a great preponderance, even nineteen-twentieths of this class. The whole foreign population, aside from Spaniards, would not, I should judge, exceed two hundred souls either in Colima, Guadalajara, Tepic, or Mazatlan, as residents of each of these cities severally.

La Fabrica de Algodon da Cayetaño is situated about one league from the city, in a northerly direction, and embraces a beautiful plot of ground for this object. It is on the east bank of el rio de Colima, and its wheel is propelled by the momentum of water, led through an aqueduct of more than a mile in length, and much of it laid with stones in mortar. Esta Fabrica is one hundred feet long by fifty feet wide, of two stories high, constructed of soft-burnt bricks, with a terraced roof, and plastered on both sides. The court-yard and out-buildings are spacious and well adapted in their design to promote the best interest of the factory; the former is ornamented with a fountain and orange trees. This factory runs sixty looms with all the appurtenances requisite for manufacturing, and employs about one hundred and fifty operatives in all, when in full operation. It is considerad in Mexico, that two natives will perform in a cotton factory, what is usually required of one American operative, in the State of Massachusetts. Their daily wages will average three reales, ranging from one real to five reales. These operatives live in the out-houses just alluded to, and seem to be happy in their avocations. The cost of the factory, when the construction of it took place under the superintendence of Señor Barney, in the year 1841, amounted to one hundred thousand dollars, divided into one hundred shares; and it is said to yield an annual profit,

deducting all disbursements, of twenty thousand dollars. Señor Barney owns one-fifth of the whole of this factory, as I was informed, and one-fourth in a cotton and *spinning* factory by the name of Harmonia, situated on the opposite side of the river, and nearer to the city. Much of this cotton thread is sold to the natives in the city of Colima, for the purpose of manufacturing rebozos and various other articles of home consumption. It is said to pay a higher per cent. than to weave it into domestics. The cost of this factory is computed at forty thousand dollars, and it is constructed in a similar manner to the one already mentioned, and is propelled by a water wheel; though the whole is on a much smaller scale, employing thereby fewer operatives. This factory is said to yield a net annual profit of twenty-five per cent. on its original investment. The price of raw cotton ranges from five to ten cents a pound; but it is not generally cleaned so as to be adapted for use, till it is run through the cotton gins attached to the factories.

Near la fabrica de Algodon de Harmonia, I observed, one day in riding past, an old Jesuitical establishment dilapidated, and mouldering in the ruins of its *ancient* greatness. It was here after the conquest of Anahuac, as well as over other fertile portions of the country, that the Jesuits endeavored by kindness, adaptation, and insinuation, to ingratiate themselves with the natives and make them tools to their own luxury and magnificence, rather than meek disciples of Jesus as their order would very naturally lead the supposition. Had they not been held in check by other powers, and expelled from religious association by the famous Bull published in 1773, in such a manner as to have neutralized their power,—the ambition, arrogance, and consumption of Ignatius Loyola and James Lainer, would have overshadowed such characteristics in Alexander the Great, burying the name of him in the tomb of oblivion, and left

no foot-hold for Napoleon Bonaparte, to have predicated a faint hope upon.

Adios,

Señor,

AGRICOLA.

CINCINNATUS.

LETTER XLVI.

Exuberancy of the Valley of Colima—Its Cultivation—Productions—Cotton—Rice—Sugar—Coffee—Cacao Trees, and Their Nuts—Banana and Plantain Trees—Description of—Pine Apples—Description of—Different Species of Annonas—Palm Family—Description of the most Useful—Their Uses and Value—Tamarind Tree—Bamboo Cane—Jatropha Manihot, and its Uses.

AMIGO MIO :—Owing to the peculiarity and location of the valley of Colima, tropical nature has seemed from the multiplicity and exuberance of her valuable productions, to have unbosomed herself and received the seeds of impregnation ; and feeling a genial, yet a stronger heat from volcanic fires, she ceases not to vegetate the seasons round, except when the proud Colima abandons its wonted banks, and flows not its liquid column over the fertile plain, at the foot of old Colima's smoking fumes.

Cotton is a plant which has been cultivated time immemorial in Mexico ; the culture and manufacture of it being well understood by the Toltics and Aztecs. Its uses and application as furnishing articles of clothing have been handed down, with the wants of different ages, to the present day in its general culture among the Indians and the descendants of the conquerors. In the valley of Colima, and

in regions adjacent, it is much cultivated, though in small patches, yet not with care and due attention. The staple of the nankeen and green seed cotton possess near the same qualities as these kinds do, growing in other countries, but the black seed cotton is reputed to possess a much finer and longer staple than that grown near the sea, and on the isles near the sea shore in the United States.

Rice and sugar receive much attention in this valley; but their cultivation is not pursued except where the advantages with respect to irrigation may be easily attained. The amount of these several staple productions to the acre, is large, far surpassing that commonly gathered in the United States off of the same area; however neglectful the cultivation may be practiced in this generous climate. The kind of rice grown here is aquatic, white, and remarkably heavy. It is generally planted in drills or rows, yet sometimes sown promiscuously. The manner of planting the sugar-cane in this country, is nearly the same as in Louisiana, except its being planted much closer together; however, it is cultivated and kept clean chiefly by hoeing. Its culture by means of the plow and cultivator is unknown to the Mexicans. English hoes, or those similar, are generally used, which resemble the southern hoes, adapted to slave labor. The sugar-cane, like the bamboo and Indian maize, belongs to the family of grasses; and growing to the height of ten or fifteen feet, its broad leaves and large, silky panicles, give it a beautiful aspect. Here the sugar-cane flowers only after the lapse of twelve or fifteen months from the period of planting it. The flowers are small, abundant, and clothed externally with numerous silky hairs.

The cultivation of these staples, cotton, rice, and sugar, one would suppose from the present vaccilating system of peonage, or that of depending upon peones for labor, could never, in Mexico, attain a flourishing condition, nor even

become abundant for home consumption; for if a capitalist should invest his all in a plantation or una hacienda and its appurtenances, the natives might smile at him, when he wished their labor most, and going to their banana patches, bask in the sun, waiting for bananas to drop from the branch by the force of gravitation, rather than labor, in order to satisfy their hunger. Notwithstanding the great disadvantages rising from the want of labor, the cultivation of these staples being attentively and prudently pursued, in this region, by a few *planters*, amply rewards their risks and expectancies; for their improvements are of the cheapest character.

In this valley there are already begun several coffee plantations on a small scale, one of which is owned by Señor Barney, who will have planted this year, 1856, thirty thousand trees, in addition to twenty thousand trees which have already borne. From having been in coffee regions prior to this, and the incidental knowledge I have hence acquired in this respect, I am fully impressed with the conviction that few regions possess more eminent advantages than this, to promote this branch of agriculture and commerce; and that too, with a quality of coffee seldom excelled. From my observation, there is not that spirit nor that study respecting its characteristics in the setting out, culture and pruning of coffee trees in this region, that one would expect to flow from the enormous high price which coffee berries usually bear in this market. They are worth by the wholesale twenty-five cents a pound near las haciendas. In Guadalajara, Tepic, Mazatlan, and Guaymas, they are much dearer, being worth forty cents per pound by the wholesale.

In this valley I observed several cacao trees in successful bearing, and I understood that formerly much more attention was paid to their cultivation than at present. In com-

paring them with other trees that I had seen in the United States, they reminded me most of a May-duke cherry tree; for the cacao tree both in size and shape, somewhat resembles a young cherry tree just coming into bearing; but that separates near the ground into four or five stems. The leaves are about four inches in length, smooth, but not glossy, and of a dull green color. The flowers are saffron-colored, and are very beautiful. The fruit of the cacao tree somewhat resembles a cucumber in shape, but is furrowed deeper on the sides. Its color, while growing is green, but as it ripens, this changes to a fine bluish-red, almost purple with pink veins; or in some of the varieties, to a delicate yellow or lemon color. Each of the pods contains from twenty to thirty nuts or kernels, which, in shape, are not much unlike almonds, and consist of a white, sweet, pulpy substance, enveloped in a parchment-like shell. As soon as the fruit is ripe, it is gathered and cut into slices; and the nuts, being at this time in a pulpy state, are taken out and laid on skins or leaves to be dried. They have now a sweetish acid taste, and may be eaten like other fruit. When dry, they are put up into bags for market. These trees commonly grow from fifteen to twenty feet high, do not branch out so much as many other fruit-bearing trees; and four hundred of them can be successfully cultivated on one acre; which here would remunerate the planter at least fifty cents per tree, and one *hand* or operative could tend to six acres of them, besides raising bananas enough to subsist on.

Everywhere I cast my eye to observe fruit, I saw the banana and plantain trees rearing their golden heads, laden with the most generous and nutritious of the productions of the earth, suitable to the wants of a primitive,—yea, a polished people. The manner of forming a new plantation of these trees, is by taking shoots from one to three feet high, broken off from the mother plant in its bearing state; and

in eight or nine months after these shoots have been inserted into the ground, they will begin to form their clusters, and the fruit may be gathered in less than a year from the time of planting. When the old stalks are cut down, in order to perpetuate the plantation or patch of them, and hasten a new coming harvest, there is always found among the numerous shoots which have put forth roots, one that will bear fruit three months later. It is considered among those inured to their growth, that the trees should be frequently succored, leaving one or two shoots, that the fruit may be much enlarged from that circumstance. These shoots, forming trees so soon, may be set in rows four or five feet apart each way; and each tree, under good cultivation, is considered to yield at least forty pounds of fruit per year. Thus a plantation of these trees is perpetuated without any other care, than that of cutting off the old stalks on which the fruit has ripened, letting them and the leaves decompose on the same ground, which process is said to enrich it; therefore these serve as a sufficient dressing.

With regard to the characteristics of the banana, it must be fully conceded to be one of the most valuable bounties of nature bestowed upon man. It is a species of the genus musa, and is technically known by the name of musa sapientium, growing in most tropical countries, and having leaves about eight feet long and one foot broad in the middle, and fruit four or five inches long, and in shape, resembling the cucumber. When ripe, the banana is a very agreeable fruit, with a soft and luscious pulp, and is frequently introduced in desserts within the tropics, and it is seldom eaten green like the plantain. I discovered the Mexicans to have a superstitious dislike as to cutting this fruit across, and they slice it always from end to end; because in the former case, the section presents an imaginary resemblance to the instrument of our Saviour's crucifixion.

The banana is sometimes fried in slices. If the pulp of this fruit be squeezed through a fine wire sieve, it may be formed into small loaves, which, after having been properly dried, may be kept for a long length of time.

The plantain tree is another one of the most valuable gifts of Providence, to perpetuate and feed man in a tropical climate. It is also another of the genus musa, and of the palm tribe, known technically by the name of musa paradisiaca. The stem of this tree or plant, is soft, herbaceous, fifteen or twenty feet high, with leaves often more than six feet long, and nearly two feet broad. The spike of flowers is nearly four feet long, and nodding. The fruit which succeeds the fertile flowers on the lower part of the spike, is often eight or nine inches long, and above an inch in diameter; at first it is green, but when ripe it is of a pale yellow color, and has a delicious sweet pulp. It is reputed to be one of the most useful fruits in the vegetable creation, and as some of the plants are in bearing most of the year, it forms the entire sustenance of many of the inhabitants of tropical countries.

The fruit on one spike or bunch, is often known to weigh from sixty to eighty pounds, when remarkably well cultivated. In case of being used as bread, it is roasted or boiled when fully grown, and when ripe it is made into tarts, sliced and fried in butter, or dried and preserved as a sweetmeat. Five dozen plantains are esteemed sufficient to serve one man for a week, instead of bread, and will support him much better. The number generally grown on a bunch, varies from one hundred to one hundred and sixty, and even sometimes run up to one hundred and eighty. In this valley, with the advantages of irrigation, the slips from the standard plants are set out or renewed every month in the year; and a rapid growth in a young orchard, or *huerta de plàntanos*, is the consequence of good cultiva-

tion, and in ten months from planting or setting the shoots, the husbandman may look for an ample return for his labor. There are several varieties of the banana; some are much larger, but never in ripening attain that sugary sweetness so common to the smaller kind.

The pine-apple is another valuable production of this lovely valley, and is distinguished by its size and peculiar spicy flavor. It is extensively cultivated, and requires no more attention than the culture of beans; the terminal tufts of leaves for re-producing the fruit, may be set two feet apart each way, producing thereby more than ten thousand pine-apples on one acre. As a fruit, it is usually pronounced the first class in the world, and it was originally discovered by the Europeans in Peru. The leaves are canaliculate in form, and spiny on the margin; the stem erect, and about two feet high; the flowers blue and united in a dense spike, which is crowned at the summit with a tuft of leaves; the berries in ripening unite and give to this spike somewhat the form of a pine cone, but it is much larger.

Here I noticed among the several varieties, one called botanically the B. pinguin, having the fruit separately in clusters, and not in a cone; the leaves of this kind afford a fibre which is manufactured into cordage, and sometimes into cloth by the natives.

From the pine-apple is made very good wine, which turns in about three weeks, but recovers by longer keeping. In the tropical countries, the fruit is often preserved entire by the rich, and when taken out of the syrup it is iced with sugar.

Here I also noticed the Mamey, and Chirimoya, or custard apple, growing in great perfection. As to the first, the tree appeared as large as the butter-nut tree in the United States, and its fruit is near the size and shape of a

goose egg; and when ripe, the pulp is of a reddish or pink color, enveloping a kernel about the size and shape of an almond, though smooth and of a brown color. The fruit of this possesses rather a sickish or insipid sweetness, and to like it is a taste acquired. That of another kind, I noticed, seems to be a much smaller tree, about the size of a cherry or plum, and under good culture bears a fruit rather larger than a goose egg, and of that shape. When ripe, the rind looks yellowish, and also the pulp; this is full of seeds which are near the size and shape of watermelon seeds, and it has a most luscious and spicy taste.

This class of tropical fruit is recognized as the custard apple. In their character, these are blossom-bearing trees; the bark is smooth and rather of an ashy color, and the form of the leaves somewhat lanceolate, of a pale greenish complexion. One hundred of these may be cultivated on an acre successfully, and each be made to yield three dollars worth of fruit per year.

In this prolific region of country, I observed several of the most useful species of the palm family, the pride of the tropics, and more than any other contributing to give a peculiar and imposing character to the vegetation of these regions. Their lofty, straight and unbranching trunks, crowned at the summit by a tuft of large, radiating leaves, gives them an aspect entirely unique, and far surpassing that of other trees in majesty. Aside from the grandeur of their appearance, many of them hardly yield to any other vegetable in useful properties. They belong to the monocatyledonous division of plants, and have their parts arranged in threes or one of the multiples of that number. The calyx has six divisions, more or less profound; the stamens are six in number, and the fruit consists of a berry or drupe, composed of a substance sometimes hard and scaly, but more often fleshy or fibrous, surrounding three or

usually, a single one-seeded nut. The stem is simple, or very rarely branching, and is sustained by a mass of fibrous roots at the base.

The species of the palm family of plants are quite numerous; and among the more useful of the palms may be mentioned the cocoa-nut, the sago, and the date. Though some of the palm family attain the stature of trees, yet in some of the species the stem rises only a few inches above the surface of the ground. This stem is round; but internally the fibres are arranged in fascicles, and not in concentric circles, as with trees generally. The stem is covered externally with the sheaths of the fallen leaves or their cicatrices, and is terminated with a tuft of pinnate or flabelliform leaves. The center is soft, while the circumference is firm and hard like horn. From the midst of the leaves arises a simple or branching spadix, on which the numerous small flowers are disposed, and which at first, is enveloped in one or several spathæ or sheaths.

While in the valley of Colima, and contemplating the bounties of Providence bestowed upon man, I noticed with much attention and admiration the wise economy in nature with reference to the amount she might sustain on an acre of ground, without conflicting with the usual routine of other productions. In this respect, I saw the cocoa-nut palm planted among coffee, cacao, plantain and banana trees, and also, among sugar-cane and other staple growths, towering high and serving as a screen to those tender vegetable-like trees, which the intense heat of a tropical sun not unfrequently tends to blast. These palms planted in this manner, demand no extra cultivation from the growths among which they stand, and may be set twenty feet apart each way, giving thereby about one hundred trees to the acre. The cocoa-nut tree first produces fruit when seven or eight years old; after which each tree yields annually

from fifty to a hundred nuts, worth in this region of Mexico, three cents each. The manner of propagation observed with respect to this kind, is to prepare a plat of ground where it can be plentifully irrigated during the dry season; and then the nuts may be set out two feet apart in each direction, care being taken to cultivate and irrigate them when required, till they are two years old, when they should be carefully taken up, and transplanted to the orchard ground designated for their bearing.

The cocoa-nut is a woody fruit, of an oval shape, from three or four to six or eight inches in length, covered with a fibrous husk, and lined internally with a white, firm and fleshy kernel. This tree (cocos nucifera botanically called) producing the cocoa-nut, and being of the palm family, often rises as if plumbed by a master builder, from forty to sixty feet high, having on its summit only leaves or branches, which appear like immense feathers, each fourteen or fifteen feet long, three feet broad and winged. Of these, the upper ones are erect, the middle ones horizontal, and the lower ones are drooping. The trunk is naked, straight, and marked with the scars of the fallen leaves. The nuts hang from the summit of the tree in clusters of a dozen or more together. The external rind of the nut has a smooth surface, and is of a somewhat triangular shape. This encloses an extremely fibrous substance of considerable thickness, which immediately surrounds the nut. The latter has a thick and hard shell, with three holes at the base, each closed with a black membrane. The kernel that lines the shell, is sometimes an inch in thickness, and encloses a considerable quanty of sweet and watery liquid, of a whitish color, which enjoys the reputation of milk. The kernel of the nut in taste somewhat resembles the filbert, and is used as food in various modes of dressing. When pressed in a mill, they yield an oil,

which, in some countries, is the only oil used at table; and which, when fresh, is equal in quality to that of almonds. The milk or fluid contained in the nut is an exceedingly cool and agreeable beverage, which, when good, somewhat resembles the kernel in flavor. The fibrous husks or coats which envelope the cocoa-nut, after having been soaked for some time in water, become soft and remarkably pliable; they are then beaten in order to free them from the other substances with which they are intermixed, and which fall away like saw dust, the stringy part only being left; this is then spun into long yarns, woven into sail-cloth, or twisted into cables, even for large vessels. The cordage thus manufactured is in several respects preferable to that brought from Europe; but particularly for the advantages which are derived from its floating in water. The woody shells of the nuts are so hard as to receive a high polish, and are formed into drinking cups, which are much used in the southern portions of the United States, and tropical countries; and also into other domestic utensils, which are sometimes expensively mounted in silver. On the summit of the cocoa-nut tree, the tender leaves at their springing up, are folded over each other, so as to somewhat resemble a cabbage. These are occasionally eaten in place of culinary greens, and are a very delicious food, though expensive, being at the destruction of the tree. Among the natives of this country, the larger leaves are extensively used for the thatching of buildings, and are wrought into baskets, brooms, mats, sacks, hammocks and many other useful articles for domestic uses. The trunks are made into boats by the natives of the tropics, and furnish them timber for the construction of their houses; and when their central is cleared away, they form excellent gutters for the conveyance of water. If whilst growing, the body of the tree be bored, a white and

sweetish liquor exudes from the wound which is called toddy. This I noticed was collected in vessels of earthenware, and it is much esteemed as a beverage. It is highly nutritious and stomachic. When fresh it is very sweet; in a few hours it becomes somewhat acid, and in this state it is perfectly agreeable; but in the space of twenty-four hours it is complete vinegar. By distillation, this liquor yields an ardent spirit, sometimes called rack, and is more esteemed than that obtained by distillation from rice or sugar. If boiled with quick-lime it thickens into a syrup, which is much liked by the natives.

In this region of country, and towards the sea coast, and up and down it from a short distance out of the port of Manzanillo, I noticed another kind of palm, botanically called sagus Rumphii, and to abound seemingly without end. It grows wild, forming extensive and shady forests, which I discovered most agreeable to me, when wishing to rest from travel under their extended branches. The trunk is upright, and is crowned at the summit with a tuft of pinnated leaves, composed of very numerous, long, narrow, smooth and pointed leaflets. The fruit is about the size of a pullet's egg, covered with shining scales, and is edible. In the region of its abundant growth in this country, an extensive and growing business is pursued by the natives in gathering the nuts and pressing them in a primitive looking mill, which process is called manufacturing palm oil. It is much esteemed and readily sold in the inland markets, and also, to foreign vessels. The trunk contains a farinaceous pith, which is a very wholesome aliment. Sago is made from it, as from that of most other palms. For this purpose, the pith is taken out, bruised in a mortar, and put into a cloth strainer; it is then held over a trough, and water being poured in, the pith is washed through the strainer into the trough below; the water then being drawn

off, the sago is taken out and dried for use or transportation. It is highly esteemed as an article of food. Sago is granulated in a manner similar to that adopted in the preparation of Tapioca, made from the manioc, which I shall shortly mention as being found indigenous to Anahuac.

In taking a more ample survey of *las huertas de la ciudad de Colima*, or the gardens of the city of Colima, I observed still another variety of the palm family, known generally as the date palm; though of this class I saw but few, yet I could really discover no reason why this palm would not flourish as well here and in the southern portions of California, and of the United States, as in the region of Biledulgerid. This is a majestic tree, rising sixty feet and upwards; the trunk is straight, simple, scaly, elegantly divided by rings, and crowned at the summit by a tuft of very long pendant leaves. The leaves are ten or twelve feet long, composed of alternate narrow folioles, folded longitudinally. The male and female flowers are upon different trees. The fruit is disposed in ten or twelve very long pendent bunches. This palm is reproduced from the roots, or shoots, or by planting the axil of the leaves in the earth, which is the most approved mode, as female plants may be selected, while a few males, scattered here and there, are quite sufficient. Great care should be taken to water them frequently, and protect them from the rays of the sun, till they have taken root. Plants raised by this method will bear fruit in five or six years; while otherwise, fifteen or twenty years might be required. When the male plant is in bloom, the pollen is collected and scattered over the female flowers. Each female produces ten or twelve bunches every year, which, when gathered, are hung up in a dry place, until so much of their moisture is evaporated, as to allow of their being packed. The fruit is an oval, soft, drupe, having a very hard stone, with a

longitudinal furrow on one side, and when fresh, I discovered it to possess a delicious perfume and taste. Dates are sugary, very nourishing, wholesome, and require no preparation. The best fruits of this kinds I noticed, have firm flesh, of a yellow color. They are varied by culture both in size and shape. A bunch weighing twenty or twenty-five pounds, is worth from eighty cents to one dollar, when of good quality. This palm may be planted the same distance apart as the cocoa-nut palm, making about one hundred on an acre, and in the same manner, among other arborary growths. I was informed that almost every portion of this most valuable tree is converted into use. The wood is very hard, almost incorruptible, and is used for building. The leaves after being macerated in water, become supple, and are manufactured into hats, mats, and baskets. The petioles afford fibres from which cordage is made. In China, the nuts after being burnt, are much used in the composition of India ink. Palm wine is made from the trunk. For this purpose, the leaves are cut off, and a circular incision made a little below the summit of the tree, then a deep and vertical fissure, and a vase is placed below to receive the juice, which is protected from evaporation. The time of planting the shoots is early in the spring, and such situations for an orchard of this kind, should be selected as abound in springs, or can be easily irrigated at pleasure. It is said this kind of palm lives from two hundred to three hundred years. Notwithstanding, the trunk is used for the beams and rafters of houses, and also for implements of husbandry; the pith of the young trees is eaten, as well as the young and tender leaves. Sometimes ardent spirit is distilled from the fruit; and the stones are ground to make oil; and the paste that is left is given to cattle and sheep. This tree thus considered, with those I have just mentioned of this most valuable family of plants,

fills, to almost an *inconceivable* extent, that order of nature, which excites the admiration, and teaches man reverence, and that the "Deity believed is joy matured."

In observing many trees quite common to this region, none seemed more grateful to me of a hot day, than to fall in with a Tamarind tree. Its short trunk, with its branching limbs extending out at least twenty feet from the center, and its small leaves, seemed to welcome the wearied traveller, or one walking or riding about to observe the gardens, to the shades of freshness and repose. This is a large and beautiful tree, belonging to the natural family leguminosoe. The leaves are pinnate, composed of sixteen or eighteen pairs of sessile leaflets, which are half an inch only in length, and one-sixth in breadth. The flowers are disposed, five or six together, in loose clusters; the petals are yellowish, and beautifully variegated with red veins. The pods are thick, compressed, and of dull brown color when ripe. The seeds are flat, angular, hard and shining, and are lodged in a dark, soft, and adhesive pulp. The fruit has an agreeable, acid and sweetish taste, is refrigerant and gently laxative. A simple infusion in warm water, forms in a hot climate a very grateful beverage, especially to invalids, and in case of febrish diseases.

Along the Mexican coast on the Pacific, and on the margins of the rivers, and in damp situations, I noticed the bamboo cane in forest-like form, while its importance for native use, struck me with its imposing characteristics. It has a hollow, round, straight, and shining stem, and sometimes grows to the height of forty feet and upwards; has knots at the distance of ten or twelve inches from each other, with thick, rough, and heavy sheaths, alternate branches, and small, entire, and spear-shaped leaves. There is scarcely any plant in hot climates so common as this, and few are more extensively useful. Many of the

inhabitants, especially the natives of the tropics build their houses almost wholly of bamboo, and make all sorts of furniture with it, in a very ingenious manner. They likewise form with it several kinds of utensils for their kitchens and tables. Boxes, baskets, and many other articles, as well as the masts of small boats, are made of this valuable plant. After having been bruised, steeped in water and formed into pulp, paper is manufactured from the sheaths and leaves. The stems are frequently bored and used as pipes for conveying water. Many of the walking canes used in Europe and in the United States, are formed of young bamboo shoots.

Within the tropics, I have frequently noticed the natives building a bamboo house, which was done by cutting the canes off twelve or fifteen feet long, and digging a trench the circumference of the house plot, and near eighteen inches deep, when the canes are set in rows close together, leaving a space for doors and windows, and then the earth is thrown back and trod compactly. The rafters and beams to these houses are composed of the same plant, while they are covered with palm leaves.

In my review of plants and trees, and of their productions and adaptation towards supplying the wants of man in a native state, while sojourning in Mexico, the characteristics of the Jatropha manihot or the manioc, enforced the utility of this plant upon me, as one deserving of high consideration. It was well known to the Aztecs, was cultivated by them, and it formed among them one of their most valuable staples of life. It is a tortuous shrub, allied to the caster-oil plant, and interesting from the nutritious qualities of its roots. It is indigenous to tropical America. The stem is smooth, branching, and six or seven feet high; the leaves are alternate, deeply divided into from three to seven lobes, which are lanceolate, acute, and entire; the

flowers are disposed in loose compound racemes, and the calyx is reddish or pale yellow. The fruit is almost globular, and is composed of three cells, each containing a shining seed about as large as those of the castor-oil plant. It is easily cultivated, grows rapidly, produces abundantly, and accommodates itself to most every atmosphere, and also to almost every kind of soil. The roots attain the size of the thigh, requiring a year to bring them to that perfection; nor can they be kept in the ground for a longer period than two seasons. It is said that one acre of maniec will nourish more persons than six acres of wheat. I am told by those who understand the culture of this plant, that every part of it is filled with a milky juice, which is almost instant poison, bringing on death in a few minutes when swallowed; and it may well excite surprise that human ingenuity should have converted its roots into an article of food. For this purpose the roots are ground in a mill, or pounded to the consistency of paste, which is then put into sacks, and these are exposed for several hours to the action of a very heavy press. By this means, it is deprived of all the poisonous juice, and the residue is called cassava. Cassava fleur, when kept free from moisture, will continue good for fifteen or twenty years. It is very nutritious, half a pound a day being sufficient for one person. It is also the basis of several different beverages, some of which are acid, agreeable, and even nutritive. The substance called tapioca, is separated from the fibrous part of the roots by taking a small quantity of the pulp, after the juice is extracted, and working it by hand, till a thick white cream appears on the surface. This being scraped off and washed in water, gradually subsides to the bottom. After the water is poured off, the remaining moisture is dissipated by a slow fire, and the substance, being constantly stirred, gradually forms into grains about as

large as those of sago. This is considered the purest and most wholesome part of the manioc.

Adios,

Señor,

AGRICOLA.

CINCINNATUS.

LETTER XLVII.

Banian Tree, and its Fruit—Description of—Maize, its general Use—Famine—Palo de Vaca, a Cow Tree—Description thereof—Variety of Plums—Peruvian Bark—The Tree—Description of—Sarsaparilla Vine—Kind of Capsicum—Mahogany and Logwood Trees—Description of—Vanilla Plant, and its Use.

AMIGO MIO:—The celebrated banian tree, so well know and so much venerated in the East from its shading propensities, solicited of me a moment's attention; especially one day when I had become much fatigued from walking. I noticed but few of the banian trees; however, I understood them to be indigenous to the country. It appears to be one of the most remarkable curiosities of the vegetable kingdom. It never dies; for every branch shoots downwards, and striking into the ground, becomes itself a parent tree, whose branches in like manner spread. I saw several which would shelter at least one thousand persons, all at once. The bark is rather brownish, or ashy color, and when a branch is cut off, there issues from the incision a milky juice, which is very adhesive and glutinous. I noticed a small fruit growing on these trees, which very much resembles the fig in shape, of a scarlet color, and is used in the same manner as cucumbers for pickles.

This region also produces maize, in connection with the other productions, which I have attempted to describe.

The cultivation of it is far more extensive than that of the plantain, banana or manioc. Advancing towards the central plains, one meets with fields of this important plant all the way from the coast to the valley of Tolucca, which is upwards of three thousand feet above the sea. Notwithstanding the bounteous productions of nature in her fruits and other grains in the Mexican Republic, maize must be considered as the principal food of the people, as well as of most of the domestic animals; and the year in which the maize harvest fails, is one of famine and misery to the inhabitants. It was a staple production among the Aztecs, and formed the staff of their subsistance. Out of the stalks they manufactured their syrups and sugars; and the kernels being *smashed* or ground between two stones, one being a hand stone, and the other hollowed out to receive them; the paste or substance manufactured thus, was manipulated in such a manner as to give a round ball of it the form of a pancake, though thinner, which custom or usage has been handed down to the present time. The cakes thus made were baked on stones in the pristine days of Anahuac; but at present, on thin iron plates over a coal fire. The fecundity of the Mexican variety of maize is astonishing; fertile lands yielding usually a return of three hundred or four hundred fold. Of all the gramina cultivated by man, none is so unequal as this in its produce; as it varies in the same field, according to the season, from forty to two hundred or three hundred for one. If the harvests are good, the planter makes his fortune more rapidly than by any other grain; the price varying from fifty cents to two dollars per fifty pounds. But frightful dearths sometimes occur, when the natives are obliged to feed on unripe fruit, cactus, berries, and roots. Diseases arise in consequence; and these famines are usually attended with a great mortality among the children. During this season of famine, all domestic animals suffer, nearly in like manner.

The grain when beaten affords a nutritive bread called arepa, and the meal is employed in making soups or gruels, which are mixed with sugar, honey, and even sometimes with pounded potatos. Many kinds of drinks are also prepared from it, some resembling beer, while others do cider. In the valley of Tolucca, the stalks are squeezed between two cylinders, and from the fomented juice a spirituous liquor, called *pulquede mahis*, is produced.

As one among the most striking curiosities of nature, which has as yet come to my knowledge in this strange country, I was shown, one day in a craggy place, and while on the western slope of the Mexican Cordillera, a tree called by the natives, palo de vaca, that is, cow tree. My attention was arrested by the peculiar uniqueness of the name, and my curiosity became much excited to discover the reason of its being so called. It appears to be peculiar to the littoral Cordillera. This tree has oblong pointed leaves, with a somewhat fleshy fruit, containing one, or sometimes two nuts. When an incision is made in the trunk, there issues abundantly a thick glutinous milky fluid, perfectly free from acrimony, and having an agreeable smell. When exposed to the air, the juice presents on its surface a yellowish cheesy substance, in membranous layers, which are elastic, and in five or six days become sour, and afterwards putrify. Contemplating the character of this tree, a few drops of a vegetable fluid impresses one with the power and fecundity of nature. It grows on the parched side of a rock not unfrequently, having a dry and leathery foliage, while its large woody roots scarcely penetrate into the ground. For several months in a year its leaves are not moistened by a shower, its branches look as if they were dead or withered; but when the trunk is bored, a bland and nourishing milk flows from it. I understood that, at sun-rise, this vegetable fountain would flow most freely.

Never was there a country more verified by Scripture, with reference to the fountains of life flowing freely, than this; for behold here the vine and the fig tree, the milk and the honey!

In the city of Colima, and all through the country on ranchos and haciendas, I saw three kinds of plums, which I should think all indigenous, having a purple, greenish, and yellow color when ripe; the first is much the largest, being about the size of a pullet's egg, and having somewhat the resemblance in shape to a crab apple; the others are smaller, but partake of the same form. They are all sweet, scarcely having a subacid taste, when ripe; and in this state, the pulp is remarkable mellow, while the stone is rather larger than that of the best class cultivated in the United States. The tree resembles the fig tree both in size, form, and also in the color of its bark; and with respect to the habit of its being reproduced, it is by slips or shoots, which, if large when cut off, will bear a considerable fruit the next year; the time for setting them in the ground being in the midst of the rainy season, June and July. These plum trees blossom in March and the fruit begins to be abundant about the first of May. They present a most striking anomaly in the characteristics of fruit-bearing trees, with reference to their ripening their fruit before the leaves begin to shoot out. This appearance is truly unique, and creates in one a spontaneous glow of admiration, when he beholds them in all the different stages of perfecting these golden bounties assigned to man. The blossoms are of a scarlet color, though somewhat resembling the lilac, and issue forth in clusters on the ends of the branches, and along their lateral surface.

There is also another species of this class of plums, which I noticed growing abundantly, and in a wild state, among other forest trees. It resembles those mentioned in every

respect, except the fruit is rather oblong, red, and possessing a remarkable acidity.

Having closed my observations with regard to the cultivated productions and fruits, having come under my notice in this prolific country, especially in this region, may it not be presuming to note and consider what nature has here spread out in her forests, to promote the happy condition of man!

Before this, I had frequently read descriptions of the Peruvian tree, so celebrated for bearing the Peruvian bark, which is so well known and distinguished for its natural medicinal properties in feverish diseases, both as tonic and stomachic; especially its extracted substance called quinine. This tree is one of the various species of chinchona, which is the spontaneous growth of many parts of tropical America. I was informed by Señor Barney of Colima that it abounded near the coast, and that he had tested its properties. A few of the trees came under my notice; and in appearance this tree resembles somewhat a cherry tree, and bears clusters of red flowers. The bark is of three kinds; the red, the yellow, and the pale. The crown bark, as the highest priced is termed, is of a pale, yellowish red. It is much used here in case of fevers. The true or medicinal kind of smilax, known commonly as Sarsaparilla, abounds throughout the Mexican coast on the Pacific. Much of this is gathered by the natives, baled in packages of one hundred and fifty pounds, and brought into Colima for sale. It is then shipped to foreign countries, Europe and the United States. It is a green vine, usually spiny, and seems in its botanical characters allied to the asparagus, but different in its habit. The leaves are scattered, coriaceous or membranous, entire, nerved, and usually more or less heart-shaped; while the leaf-stalks are provided with tendrils at their base. The flowers are

dicecious, chiefly disposed in little axillary umbels, and the corolla is divided into six lobes; and the male flowers have six stamens. The Fruit is a small globular berry, usually having three seeds. The roots are very long and slender, with a wrinkled bark, brown externally and white within, and have a small, woody heart. They are inodorous, having a mucilaginous and a slightly bitter taste, with somewhat sudorific and dioretic properties; yet in a slight degree; and are in this country considered a most valuable specific by the natives, in venereal and scrofulous diseases.

In extensive domestic use among the families at Colima, and throughout the country, I observed a kind of capsicum. This pepper tree abounds extensively in the forests along the coast, though somewhat back from it, and might, with the articles just mentioned, and with those under consideration, be made most valuable objects of commerce. It is rather succulent, perennial and shrubby in its habit. The leaves are simple, smooth, veined, and somewhat pubescent. The flowers are disposed in nearly filiform aments, are destitute of either calyx or carolla, and are separated by very small scales; these aments or spikes are opposite to the leaves or terminal. The pods are from one to two inches long, somewhat cone-shaped, with rounded base, and before fully ripe, of a dark greenish color. The taste is remarkably pungent, seemingly much more so than that of the Cayenne pepper sauce, which is so common in the market. The fruit of this plant or shrub is eaten here in large quantities, both with animal and vegetable food, and is mixed in greater or less proportion, with almost all kinds of sauces. Most of the species of peppers are almost strictly confined within the limits of the tropics, and abound particularly in the equatorial regions of America.

Again while sojourning in this foreign land, I observed towards the coast, the Mahogany tree presenting its char-

acteristics, lofty, beautiful and allied to the Pride of India. The tree is of a rapid growth, and its trunk often has a diameter of four feet. Its leaves are pinnate, composed of four pairs of oval, acuminate, entire leaflets, and destitute of a terminal one. The flowers are small and white, being disposed in loose panicles. The fruit is a hard, woody, oval capsule, about as large as a turkey's egg. The wood is hard, compact, reddish-brown, and susceptible of a high polish. I could but admire this family of trees when I contemplated the various uses to which the wood is applied, both among the civilized and enlightened, for articles of taste and polish.

Not departing from my position, acres of logwood trees, of the leguminosæ family, presented the aspect of practicable and commercial utility; however, these trees grow wild, and in moist places. This species of tree is small and straggling; the leaves are pinnate; and the flowers small, yellowish, and are disposed in axillary racemes at the extremity of the usually spinous branches. The wood is red, tinged with orange and black, and so heavy as to sink in water, and susceptible of receiving a good polish. Thousands of cords of this wood are cut in the rear of San Blas and Mazatlan, and other convenient ports on this Mexican coast, packed in on mules and burros, sold for one cent a pound, and shipped in return in European vessels which import foreign *merchandise*. I noticed more of this logwood transported and corded up at Mazatlan than at any other port I visited on the Pacific side.

In the forests of this region, I noticed a parasitical plant or vine called vanilla, a genus of orchidaceous plants. It is found in most of the tropical parts of America. The pod is of a yellowish color, corrigated, about eight inches long, and containing in its cavity, besides numerous minute black seeds, a black, oily and balsamic substance. Its fra-

grance is owing to the presence of benzoic acid, crystals of which form upon the pod if left undisturbed. The properties of this plant were well known to the Aztecs, and were used then as now, in flavoring chocolate, and other culinary and confectionary dishes, and also liquors.

Having written and explained to you, amigo mio, much of my observations in this region, as well as in other portions of Mexico where I have traveled, in every sense which my knowledge of the arts and sciences will admit, in view of being unprepared to note the passing scenes and natural phenomena with any other instruments than my eyes, reason, judgment, pencil and paper; you will please accept of this small contribution of light, without my affixing to it any lengthened or customary apology. However, while yet I retain my position and thoughts here, I cannot suppress my contemplation and admiration of this great and bountiful country. Nature has given it mountains towering many thousand feet into the air, that seem to divide the clouds and serve as electric rods to induce gentle showers to pour upon the fertile earth; it has formed it with all that varied altitude and climate contributing to the health, comfort and luxuries of man; it has lavished upon it all the grains, vegetables and fruits required to sustain his real or pampered wants; it has conceived within its bowels all the precious metals, as well as useful, yet discovered for his exchange and use; and finally, it has united in its volcanic throes, and eruptions, and contributions, a soil so quick and ever ready to receive the impress of his labor, in almost all the tropical productions, and as bountiful in returning to him a most ample reward.

Adios,

Señor,

AGRICOLA.

CINCINNATUS.

LETTER XLVIII.

Orange, Lemon, Citron, and Fig Trees—Description of—Grape Vine—Its adaptation to portions of Mexico—Birds, Animals, and Insects.

AMIGO MIO:—Before taking leave of the city of Colima, and while my mind is still alive to a full view of the fruitful family of plants and trees, tastefully ornamental to plots surrounding private residences, and to pleasure-grounds, medicinally conducive to health in the pliable promotion of the digestive organs; and notoriously valuable to commerce; the orange, the lemon, the citron, and the fig, should not be passed over in silence, nor without considering their interesting and beautiful characteristics, as they hold so eminent a rank in the estimation of the world, for their various uses and appliances. The Orange tree is low, evergreen, and branching, bearing oblong, oval, acute, smooth and shining leaves, inserted on winged leaf-stalks, by which character, it is easily distinguished from the lemon. The flowers are white, containing about twenty stamens, and are disposed in clusters of from two to six upon a common peduncle. The fruit is globose, bright yel-

low, and contains a pulp, consisting of a collection of oblong vesicles filled with a sugary and and refreshing juice; it is besides, divided into eight or ten compartments, each containing several seeds. I noticed here several varieties; the sweet or China, the bitter or Seville, the Maltese, and Shaddock. The orange tree is exceedingly long-lived, like the grape vine, and is still considered young at the age of one hundred years. An essential oil is obtained from the flowers, which is hardly less appreciated than the ottor of roses. The wood of this tree is fine grained, compact, susceptible of a fine polish, and is employed in the arts. The Shaddock is a large species of orange, attaining the diameter of seven or eight inches, with a white, thick, spongy, and bitter rind, and a red or white pulp, of a sweet taste, mingled with acidity. The rind of this orange, after being soaked in lime water twelve hours or more, is much used in different countries, for conserves, stewed down in white or brown sugar.

The lemon tree I saw in a few gardens in this city; however, its general growth, so as to form an article of commerce to any extent, has not come under my observation in Mexico. It is congenreic with the orange and citron, and belongs to the natural family citrus. Its stature is that of a small tree, or a large shrub; the leaves are oval, pointed, twice as long as broad, and like those of the other species, contain scattered glands, which are filled with a volatile oil. The beauty of its smooth evergreen foliage, and the delightful fragrance of the flowers and of the fruit, have contributed to make it a favorite of attention and cultivation, as a reviving and solacing ornament, in almost every clime. The shape of the fruit is oblong; but its internal structure does not differ much from the orange. The juice is acid and agreeable; and mixed with water and sugar, it forms the well known refreshing drink called *lemonade,* used throughout the civilized world.

The citron is a small evergreen shrub, the parent stock being citrus medica; having large or slightly indented shining leaves, of somewhat oval shape, yet pointed, with no remarkable appendage on the footstalks of the leaves. The flowers are large and white, though purplish on the outside of the petals.

The citron is oblong, with a very thick rind; and the fruit partaking of the same quality as the lemon, with the exception of being somewhat less acid, is seldom eaten raw; but it is preserved in sugar as a sweetmeat. The juice is procured by simply squeezing the fruit, and then straining it through a linen or any loose filter, and is considered a most valuable remedy for the scurvy. The external part of the rind has a grateful aromatic and bitter taste, which renders it useful in cookery. When dried, it is esteemed a good stomahic, promotes the appetite, and is otherwise serviceable as medicine.

The fig tree flourishes in this region; and the fruit attains that perfection and sugary mellowness, unknown to the same varieties in the United States. The most delicious and valuable I saw were the purple, the yellow, and the white. Considering the qualities of the fig, it must be the climate in a great measure, that promotes this distinguishable characteristic in the flavor and richness of its pulp, in the low altitudes within the tropics. The cultivated fig tree seems to bear a strong resemblance to the banian tree, which I saw in this portion of the country, with reference to its leaves, bark, the manner of the fruit flowers and the form of the fruit, with the exception the latter is lacking the size and taste, and possessing more of a milky sap in its bark. The stem grows from twenty to thirty feet high, with a trunk sometimes two feet in diameter, giving out a great number of long, twisted, and pliant branches, which are grayish and rough when young. The

leaves are deciduous, of the size of the hand, having from three to five rounded lobes. The flowers are very small, unisexual, contained in great numbers in a common receptacle, which is fleshy and connivent at the summit, where it is almost closed by a series of little teeth. The male flowers occupy the superior part of this recepticle, and the female, which are the most numerous, the bottom, and all the remaining part of the cavity; each ovary becomes a seed, surrounded with a pulp, which together with the receptacle, forms the fruit.

The fruit is solitary, commonly of a purplish color, having a soft, sweet, and fragrant pulp. The process of increasing and ripening the fruit, I am told, is an art which requires much attention. The operation is rendered necessary by the two following facts, namely: that the cultivated fig-bearers have mostly female flowers, while the male flowers are abundant upon the wild fig tree; and secondly, that the flower of the fig is upon the inside of the receptacle, which constitutes the fruit. It is hence necessary, where figs are produced for commerce, to surround the plantation and gardens containing the trees, with branches and limbs, bearing male flowers, from the wild fig tree; thus preparing the way for the fertilizing of the female flowers in the garden. And from these wild flowers, the fertilizing pollen is borne to the female flowers upon the wings and legs of small insects, which are found to inhabit the fruit of the wild fig tree. The easiest mode of re-producing this tree is by suckers, separated from the roots of old trees, and also, by boughs cut off and set in the ground in the spring, or during the rainy season of summer within the tropics.

Throughout my travels on the western slope of the Mexican Cordillera, few cultivated grape vines attracted my attention; and it is my impression that little attention is paid *to the production of* this most esculent and nutritious fruit,

except in Lower California and Sonora, and in altitudes varying from four thousand feet to seven thousand or more, above the sea. From my knowledge of the wet and dry seasons in the regions of Colima, Zapotlan, Sayula, Guadalajara, Tepic, Mazatlan, Culiacan, and Guaymas, I can see no good reason why the cultivation of the vine could not be advantageously pursued, not only as an article of luxury, but as one of the most valuable staples of the country, in the production of wine and raisins. For the rainy season seldom continues over four months in a year, June, July, August and September; and during the other eight months called the dry season, with a hot sunshine and serene sky, and also, with warm nights, that promote a most vigorous growth, the vine might, by observation, be so pruned and brought into bearing, as to ripen its fruit exclusively in that period. In the small village of Lahaina on Moui, one of the Hawaiian Islands, I was told by an intelligent gentleman, Reverend Alexander, of Lahainaluna, that, from his observation of the grape vine there, and on the lee side of that island, it would ripen its fruit almost universally in five months after pruning; thus pruning the vine the first of December, would give the citizens of Lahaina ripe grapes on the first of May. This being the case at the Islands, in latitude about twenty-one degrees north, why should or would it not be equally so in the same latitude, or varying ten or twenty degrees to the southward, on the continent, possessing always any shade of climate by its altitude?

During my Mexican travels, I had no means of catching wild birds nor animals, except by shooting them, which I did not much approve of in a strange and foreign country; as the only object I could allege in extenuation of such a slaughter, would be, to *satisfy* speculative curiosity, yet not to subserve the purpose of food, nor of raiment; therefore, I have but little to advance upon the subjects of ornithology,

zoology, or insects, in addition to my previous casual, and passing remarks. In the groves of fruit trees, and in the forests wild, I beheld the whole *family* of parrots, and many of the feathered tribe peculiar to the United States, as well as to Mexico, being birds of passage; such as the northern buzzard, king bird, mocking bird, blue-backed warbler, yellow warbler, different species of owls, crows, larks and eagles, also ducks and geese, grouse, pheasants, yellow-throated warbler, red-eyed warbler, great American king-fisher, and many more which I will forbear to specify; and others peculiar to Mexico, and tropical America, such as the sympathetic Anhima, which, loosing its mate, stays by the spot, mournful and pensive, seeking no food, till it dies also; the Mexican pewee-tyrant, also the obscure, the black-ish, the bearded and musical tyrant, the red flycatcher, silent thrush, long-billed mocking bird, blue mocking bird, plain warbler, Mexican robbin, striped finch, Mexican gold finch, coronated jay, famous jay, Mexican red bird, white-billed parrot, coronated toucan, ant-eating wood-pecker, Mexican bittern, elegant wood-pecker, yellow-throated tree climber; the refulgent, sea-green, broad-tailed, broad-billed, double-fork-tailed Mexican star, and amethystine, species of humming birds; the destroying eagle, Brazilian caracara, long-winged buzzard, gray tyrant, Domingo hangnest, military mackaw, and the black-eared humming bird; and also many more, yet I will withhold a desire to enlarge this list. Of birds which serve as food, in this Repudlic, for the use of man, there are about sixty kinds included in this class, and fifty-seven kinds of birds of plumage,—both gay and beautiful.

With regard to wild animals, I noticed a few which are not common to high latitudes in North America, and I was informed of some species as being peculiar to tropical America, and existing in Mexico; such as a species of the

Lynx, the Canadian porcupine, a peculiar kind of swine, small and somewhat resembling the hedgehog; several kinds of monkies, somewhat unique to this country; also, a tiger-cat; however, other species, peculiar to North America abound in the low or high lands of Mexico; such as deer, bison, bears, antelopes, wild-cats, catamounts, panthers, different kinds of wolves, beavers, and alligators. And further, about the uplands, and also the lowlands, I observed the magpie, wild turkies, and most of the gallinaceous tribe, the tribe of eagles, carion-crows, wild bees, butterflies, large bats and ants, together with sandflies, gallinippers; and, with all, that creeping tribe of reptiles, both loathsome and revolting to man, yet peculiar to the tropics. Moreover, there may be added to this list of animated nature, several kinds of animals and reptiles, as the tapir, jagour, cougar, ocelot, *jagnarundi*, *tagnicati*, *javali*, porcupines, anteaters, gluttons, sloths, weasels, polecats, armadillos, cavies, rattle-snakes, lizards, two species of boa, and a species of murex, producing a fine purple dye.

Throughout the tropical forests of Mexico, the plumage of birds, the hair of animals, and the down of insects; glossy, refulgent, and beautiful; or coarse, thin, and almost destitute with some; or scarcely discernable upon others; impress man respectively with peculiar notions as to the influence of climate, varying much from animated nature, within the temperate zones; whilst the melodious notes of the aerial songsters, the roaring, howling, and hissing of animals and reptiles, and the buzz of insects, remind one of peculiarities in animal instinct, adapted to climate, and a life of joyful festivity, without a care for future stores.

Adios,

Señor,

AGRICOLA.

CINCINNATUS.

LETTER XLIX.

Consideration of this part of Mexico—Government—Agriculture—Two-thirds of the Landed Estate held by the Clergy—Tottering Tenure of Mexico—Preparation and departure for California—Puerto de Manzanillo—Country Aspect—Cactus Flowering or Creeping Cereus—Description of—Rural Aspect—El Rio de la Almeria—Encampment—Sleep—Departure at 12 o'clock at night—Danger of Ladrones—Description of the Danger—Distant yell—Expected Attack—Three Crosses—Great Fears—Forest Trees and Vines—Jalap Vine or Plant—Settlements—Feathered Tribe—Soil—Lake Cuyutlan—Salinas de Cuyutlan—Population—Salt Operations—Description of—Country aspect East and North of the aforesaid Lake—Port of Manzanillo—Description of—Palms—Officials—Artesian Well Company and Boring—Mines numerous—Sketches of Mexican History since the Revolution—Republican Principles Spread—Hatred between Spaniards and Creoles—Creole Congress declaring Mexico Free and Independent—Second Congress, in the capacity of a Convention, to settle the Principles of a Constitution—When adopted—The Form of the Mexican Government, and Distribution of its Powers—Religion of State—Army—Ecclesiastical Wealth, or that of the Clergy—Registry Law, or Law Lerdo—Policy of the Government since the Constitution was formed, up to the Period of Comonfort—Distinguished Men—Regeneration of the Government by Comonfort—His apparent Policy—First Offices of a Wise Government—Five Hundred Ladrones giving Terms of Peace to a City of Twelve Thousand Inhabitants—Configuration of Mexico, an indication of Mineral Wealth—Mines Worked—Population of the Republic of Mexico—Its Classes—Wealth unevenly Divided—Education of a Few—Commerce Chilled—Indians resembling—Gadsden Purchase—Its reputed Mines and Extent—Objects of the Purchase—Its Railroad adaptability—The Route therefor—Villages and Towns in this new acquisition—Two Copper Mountains—Their Richness—H. S. Washburn's Notes, descriptive of the Gadsden Purchase—The Gila Valley—Arizona Copper Mines—Bones of the Oatman Family—Maricopa Villages—Pimo Villages—Soil of the Valley—Various Growths—Game—Extent of the Valley—The Seasons—Climate—Scenery—Indian Treatment—Indian Products—Chronic Growlers—Frequent Rains—Stock Country—Pioache Peak—Mezquit Timber—Gadsdonia Copper Mine—A Band of Apaches pursued by Americans—Tucson Valley—Its Soil—Population of the Town of Tucson—Mexican Outposts—Productions—Papago Indians—Rain in Tucson Valley—San Xavier—Fine Pineries—Soperi—Soil—Mezquit Beans—Silver Mine at Sopori—Arrivaca, its Climate and Soil—Tubatama—Productions—Altar, its Trade and Population—Sonio, Gold near—Zonuita, its importance—The Country well Watered—Tinaja Alta Route—Tinajas Altas—Flower of the Mezquit Beans—Fruit resembling Figs.

AMIGO MIO :—This portion of Mexico (the district of Colima) like most of the other parts that have come under

my notice, seems to lack that elastic spark which should construct, marshal and conduct the nerve, the energy of the nation to prosperity, happiness and the mutual alliance with the first powers of the world. The Government lacks home regulations, parental care and forethought with reference to encouraging its people to pursue with increased vigor and study the arts and sciences, devoting more circumspection and advantageous measures as to the promotion of agriculture, the basis of all other sources of wealth, importance and true preferment. It has been the custom here, as elsewhere, for the one who plows and tills the soil, bringing his produce to market, to be necessitated to pay at *las Garitas*, a consideration *ad valorem* for the privilege of selling it in the cities. It is this tax imposed directly upon the industry of the country, which the husbandmen have to pay openly, *previously* to selling whatsoever they may bring in, instead of the retail dealers, that fetters their energies and wills, without being the least encouraged by generous laws, tending to reward the sweat of their brows.

It is reported and generally believed that full two-thirds of the landed estate of this Republic are in the possession of the Clergy, who let it out, it is said, so as to ensure themselves at least five per cent. clear on the original investment. I have heard it said generally, that this *class are* ever ready to lend money, taking mortgages on real estates advantageously situated, but that they never sell lands nor want money, so as to mortgage their estates; therefore, if I may be piously excused by the reverend gentlemen, no comparison I can conceive, will hit them so appropriately and characteristically, as likening them to the Norwegian Mælstrom. In fact, the whole country bends its proud, tropical growth to being so ecclesiastically and politically hag-ridden, with *male* attire, in the form of aspirants to high positions, that it is really a query—a wonder

it yet breathes—and the presumption is that it would not, were it not within the most genial influence of the tropics!

In speaking of the Mexican Republic thus plainly, in a religious and political sense, I do not wish to be understood that, in this great national cauldron which ceases not to boil by the reason of its volcanic fires, there is no good and patriotic worth in the country; that I have from any one, met with maltreatment; but I do wish to be understood to say, that this nation has mistaken its purpose and spot; that its race is nearly run; that it scarcely survives each successive ebulition and eruption; and that the hectic flush is sometimes deceptive of hope, yet as often dies away, fast consuming its vitals.

Having feasted my eyes and reason for some time past in this lovely country, and wished many a time that it could be happily governed—that its natural resources were in a rapid progress of developement—and that internal improvements were begun and constructed, in order to equalize the fruitful season of one portion of the country with the unfruitful season of another part, as affording means of inland transportation, thereby anticipating famine and guarding against it; I feel most assuredly now a natural desire to turn my thoughts towards home—the Land of Promise—the El Dorado of the West.

Towards the last of April, (1856) being under the impression that the *Nicaragua* Line of Steamers would touch in at the port of Manzanillo, I was kindly supplied with saddle-mules and a servant to accompany me to the port, through the attentive courtesy of Señor Barney, to whom I feel under many obligations for the cordial and welcome *extension* of his house to my wants and pleasure, while I sojourned in the region of Colima. Being well armed and mounted, and taking leave of those whom I have every reason to esteem, I departed from Colima in the afternoon,

accompanied by my servant, and rode till dusk, making twenty miles. We encamped at an Indian rancho till about twelve o'clock; and soon after encampment, partaking of some eggs, tortillas and milk, I lay down under a *banian tree* to rest.

Most of the country I had traveled over in the afternoon was a fertile plain, with a few low hills and ridges near the trail, and abounding with a few growths only of any kind, with the exception of cactus, some of which resembled a tree, with reference to its *trunk* and *boughs*. The graceful curve of these attracted my attention and excited my admiration, bearing a delicious and cooling fruit, of a yellowish color, oblong, juicy, and quite full of small seeds. Through this part, I noticed many other species of this plant, but none calling forth so much pleasurable sensation as the kind called cactus grandiflorus, or the night-flowering and creeping cereus. The blossom of this species, though very short-lived, is a splendid natural production, surpassing the imagination of art, or the combination of art and science. It begins to open in the evening between seven or eight o'clock, and by eleven o'clock it is fully blown, and at four or five o'clock in the morning it begins to fade; soon after which it droops its beautiful head pensively downward, falling into a state of irrecoverable decay. When the plant is large, several blossoms will open in the same night, and there will be a succession of them for several nights together. The calyx when expanded, is about six inches in diameter, yet sometimes, I have seen it nearly a foot, yellow within, and dark brown without. The petals are many, and are of a pure white, while the great number of recurved stamina surrounding the style in the center of the blossom, tends to give it a grand and beautifully imposing appearance.

The settlements through this afternoon's travel were sparse, not possessing any peculiar characteristics which

should give rise to any lengthened remarks. The country was mostly level, and el rio de Almeria was most of the way confined to the trail; though at times diverging from it, as the surface of the country seemed to direct its course. It had been dry for nearly eight months, and consequently, the river was low, and the country did not so generally present that interesting picture that it would have done, had it been in the rainy season. Such a trail, and in such a country, is truly lonely to a stranger; moreover, especially, when night ushers in her sable mantle, one naturally feels an involuntary shudder thrill his veins, and cause his pulse to beat quickly. Prior to the departure from my encampment this night at twelve o'clock, I felt a fearful apprehension as to my own safety, with respect to proceeding further on the trail till day-light. However, the time came, and having duly prepared myself in the saddle for the occasion, and my servant being mounted, we carefully proceeded forward.

From the rather shabby aspect of my servant, and his casual *sang froid* with reference to keeping ahead of me a few feet, I did not know but that he might be one of the notorious band of *ladrones*, who infest this trail, and thereby render it exceedingly dangerous to travelers having any means with them. Passing along with slight elevations on either side, sometimes close, then farther off, afterwards through a wooded district, and occasionally crossing a small stream which appeared to wend its way by the trail, I heard in the grim stillness of the night, with woodland all around me and with bare starlight, a yell on my left about one-quarter of a mile off; it was repeated several times immediately, and my servant answered it once apparently with a mixed emotion of surprise and pleasure; in a moment, I rode up to him, telling him in Spanish if he answered again to that or a similar yell, during the night,

and putting my revolver near his ear, I would shoot him instantly; and that too, with such meaning in my expression, that he took timely warning and obeyed my injunction. The yell was continued for some time, apparently passing on a trail parallel to the one I was traveling.

Ere long, we began to ascend a ridge which formed the divide between the valley and the littoral landscape, shelving towards the coast. Having surmounted the ridge, and passing along on a slow pace, my attention was arrested by another yell, and at the same time, I observed in a recess by the side of the trail, three *crosses!* indicating this to have been the fatal spot where *ladrone*-like deeds had been committed, and where the Catholic Church had reared wooden symbols of her faith. I grasped my revolver with renewed vigor and determination in self-defence; though we passed on unmolested, yet I felt impressed with the conviction that my precaution in preventing further answers, after having heard the first yell, and seeing the character of my servant, had saved me from the like fate of those who lay buried beneath the crosses.

From the knowledge I have been able to obtain, respecting the character of *ladrones*, by conversing with intelligent Mexicans, the object of this yell was to know who I was, how I was armed and accompanied, which I immediately discovered; and also, that my servant desired to take the advantage of me, knowing that I was a foreigner, and perhaps, thinking me unacquainted with the Spanish language so as to detect him.

For some distance past, small forest trees and creeping vines, and also plants skirted our trail; and one of the most useful of these plants was Jalap. The properties of this plant were known to the Aztecs. The plant is an herbaceous twining vine, having entire cordate or three to five lobed leaves, and large, white flowers with purple

veins. The root, which is the part employed as a purgative in medicine, is very large, sometimes weighing fifty pounds or more.

Morning came, and it was beautiful; for every now and then I passed small streams pouring into la Almeria, and on which and along their sides, I beheld the Indian and mixed settlements, cultivating their small patches of maize, plantains, cocoa-nut palms, a few cacao trees, coffee trees, sugar-cane, cotton, rice, plum and orange trees, with their congenerics, and in fact, most of the productions and fruits common to this portion of Mexico; but seemingly on a scale barely sufficient for home consumption. The forest seemed enlivened by the songs of the gay and feathered tribe, beautifully clad with various tints, yet the prevailing ones were a dark green and golden, peculiar to the sunny South. The soil is quick, fertile, and generous to conceive the labor of man; and were it cultivated and cared for, even to a small extent, where famine occasionally prevails and all its consequences, a superabundance would invite all classes, in every portion of this most prolific country, to partake more largely of the bounties of the earth.

Passing on, twelve leagues before reaching the port, I arrived at the lake or *el lago de Cuyutlan*, which extends to within half a mile of the port of Manzanillo. It is supposed to be two miles wide, and twenty-five miles long; and near its margin it is extremely marshy, and low, scrubby bushes abound. The water is brackish, and no doubt, this pond is fed by the ocean, being only a few feet above its surface.

Near this small lake, the ground being low and so impregnated with saline properties seeking a lateral extension, that it becomes covered with a whitish incrustation, intermixed slightly with the soil. On the east and south side of this lake there are situated *las Salinas de Cuyutlan*

where, during the dry season, there is a population of five or six thousand individuals of both sexes, engaged in manufacturing salt, and attending to incidental business conducive to that end. Most of this population being desultory in their habitation, have paid no attention to the construction of their transient homes, living in bamboo and palm houses of the most primitive design. In passing along the lake shore, whence I first touched it till my arrival at the *villa de Cuyutlan*, I am under the impression that it is ten miles distance; and within every short space, that is, thirty or forty rods apart, I saw persons engaged in the process of making salt.

This process is to clear off half an acre of the marsh smoothly; and when the salty properties arise, they are scraped into heaps, here and there, over this surface; afterwards, and near the center of this plot, small vats, six by ten feet in dimension, are formed by sinking them three or four inches below the surface of the ground, and then filling them with salt water, which is obtained in this manner. Near the vats, a hole is dug out, ten feet in diameter by two feet deep; and then, this, as also the vats, are plastered with mortar at the bottom and sides, so as to be water-tight; afterwards, four crotched stakes are procured and driven into the ground permanently, and left above the surface seven feet high, and 12 feet apart each way; besides which, two heavy polls are laid crosswise of these stakes, and upon them, smaller ones are extended in the form of close joints. This done, sea grass and palm leaves are laid over this scaffold, on which common clay is deposited for the purpose of forming a ridge eighteen inches high and five feet in diameter, where the salt-earth in the heaps alluded to, is borne by ascending a short ladder. Then an operative takes a few buckets of water, and pouring it over this earth, it soon causes the salt water to filtrate into the basin below,

Thus this operation goes on; the earth being removed when it is expected that its saline properties are quite exhausted. Then from the basin, the salt water is dipped out and poured into the vats for evaporation, which proceeds rapidly, as the sun is nearly vertical, and intensely warm. After it is reduced to salt, which appears of a fair quality, though specks of dirt are frequently seen in it; the operatives scrape it up, depositing it in heaps of various quantities. This salt was sold readily at five dollars per hundred pounds when I visited these works, and packed into the interior as far as Guadalajara, Morelia, and Durango.

The road between las Salinas de Cuyutlan and the port, is mostly sandy, presenting comparatively nothing but a barren and dreary waste, bordering near the sea coast; however, there were a few trees of a stinted and thorny growth, some of which resemble somewhat the black locusts, yet having longer thorns. From las Salinas to the port, the distance is reputed to be ten leagues. In passing nearly two-thirds of the distance around lake Cuyutlan, those scrubby trees served greatly to parry off the intensity of the heat, occasioned by the reflection of the sun upon the water. This water is greenish, and impressed me with the conviction that it might produce sickness, yet it is said not to cause that effect.

The road from Colima to the port, bearing more on the east and north sides of the lake, is more interesting, better watered, and better timbered, consisting of an abundance of palms, spreading over thousands of acres, and of other valuable forest trees. On this side there is also more cultivation, which extends itself towards San Blas and Tepic, through many beautiful and fertile valleys, yet not tilled to the one-hundredth part of their productive capacities.

Immediately around the port of Manzanillo, there is lit-

tle tillage, except in maize for fodder, which is brought in and sold to those who are engaged in packing merchandise into the interior. The maize is sown broad-cast, so as to make the fodder grow fine, resembling coarse grass.

The harbor presents a safe appearance, being surrounded by hills two hundred or three hundred feet high, and in the rear of which, with the exception of several tongues of land, there is a general series of small ponds of brackish and rather greenish water, communicating with that of the port. The entrance is near half a mile wide; the water is reputed deep enough for any ordinary merchantman, or the largest ocean steamer on the coast; the anchorage is tenable; and the water for supplying vessels, is considered good; however it is obtained at considerable expense, being about five miles from the port, on the opposite side of the harbor, and from a small mountain stream. The diameter of the harbor may be *considered* five miles; and on the east and north sides of it, palms extensively abound. More than any other harbor on the Pacific coast of Mexico, except Acapulco, and Guaymas in the Gulf of California, the port of Manzanillo presents natural safeguards to merchantmen, which should not be passed over in silence in this work, as it is my object in these letters to throw open to the public consideration, all avenues of commerce and wealth that have fallen under my observations while traveling this year, 1856, on the Western Slope. Perhaps I may be indulged in saying that it is one of the finest of the Mexican ports; however, but little is known about it or the natural resources in the rear and surrounding country, yet I have confidence in the belief, that what I have already written with reference to the products of the territory of Colima and of the State of Jalisco, will tend to draw merchandise and reciprocal commerce to this port. In the port there are a few Indian huts, constructed of crotched stakes,

poles, and palm leaves; also, a custom house office branch for a deputy and inspector of merchandise, together with the office of the Captain of the port, and that of the Alcalde. These several officers, with the exception of the custom house officer, carried in their aspects and facial contours so much insignificance, that I will forbear to mention their characteristics.

In the port of Manzanillo there is begun an Artesian well by a Stock Company of Mexicans and Germans, living at Colima. The Company was formed in the fall of 1855, with a stock capital of seven thousand dollars, and the commencement took effect in the winter of 1856, by an American Company from California, reputed to be skilled in that system. The progress of boring was slow, being mostly through a rock of primitive formation; though, at times, coming in collision with shale. The operative Company formed for this undertaking was somewhat disappointed as to the formation of this region, supposing it to be more of a secondary formation, than the evidences thus far indicate, when coming in contact with the apparatus for boring. If this company of Americans should study their true interest, getting as they do thirty-five dollars a foot by eight inches in diameter, and being obliged to pay only one dollar per day with board for operatives, and advance this laudable undertaking to the extent desired by the Mexican Company, endeavoring to keep their good will and confidence, the field for such undertakings would be almost endless, as well as profitable, throughout the Republic of Mexico. For, among the intelligent Mexicans, there is a strong manifestation in favor of the Artesian well system, with reference to obtaining water in many of the valleys, now generally too dry for agricultural purposes, throughout the seasons.

With reference to Americans desiring to go to Mexico for the purpose of traveling and exploration, or of settling

in the country, I cannot recommend too highly a rigid observance of those rules of civility, courtesy, and morality, being extended, and observed towards all classes most scrupulously, so far as self-respect and true dignity of character will permit or demand.

Promising you near the close of these many letters to present, for your better information, a concise recapitulation of my touric ground in Mexico, touching the historic, civil, and scientific field of the western slope of the Mexican Cordillera, it has now become my time to perform that service.

From the period of its conquest, immediately succeeding the conquest of the capital of Anahuac—Tenochtitlan—yet in some portions of it somewhat later, numerous mines both of gold and silver, had been opened and most successfully worked in the departments or States of the present geographical and political division of Western Mexico, consisting of Chihuahua, Sonora, Cinaloa, Jalisco, Durango, Michoacan, Guerrero, Oajaca, Chiapa, with the States of Zacatecas and Guanajuato, prior to the commencement of the Mexican revolution, 1810, which was headed by an active and spirited priest named Hidalgo.

However some of these political divisions may have, since the revolution, undergone changes, yet the term Western Slope of the Mexican Cordillera will embrace all the territory I have expressed a desire to touch upon, in these letters, except hurredly. Since the revolution began, these mines have greatly fallen off from their former yield under the Spanish sway, owing to various causes, still mostly, to home dissensions and the want of confidence in the government. Long before this, the spirit of insurrection was rife and nearly ripe in New Spain, to dislodge herself from the almost unparalleled usurpation of the mother country, taxing and appointing colonial officers at her will and pleasure.

This spirit was much more enhanced among the intelligent Creoles by extending their views to the Republic of the United States, and seeing there freedom, prosperity, and happiness, exerting a combined and almost a supernatural influence upon the welfare of the body politic. A knowledge, with a desire to imitate, was rapidly spread over the fair plains of ancient Anahuac, and created a desire to be free, in the year alluded to; and more especially, as the new Viceroy, Venegas, at that time, displayed an offensive partiality for the Spaniards, and exasperated the Creoles by the severity of his measures. These measures led, at this time, to the immediate resort to arms in assertion of natural rights, and to gain and maintain them by the sword, if necessary.

As I have remarked, this incipient rising of a few intelligent Creoles, strongly imbued with Republican principles, was headed by a priest of liberal and enlarged notions, and of great firmness. At first, the insurrection was unsuccessful like most great efforts in producing the desired effect, and this good clergyman lost his life, dying a martyr to freedom! Yet, it glowed on and increased, in the progress of events, like a snow ball on some hoary summit, when set in motion; meeting with various success, from the inimical hatred existing between the native Spaniards and the Creoles; the former like Englishmen, long before the American revolution, looked upon the latter with a supreme and frowning contempt, as having sprung from the forests of America, thereby as being a different species of the human family, unfit to rule, or to be shown equal rights or equal terms; while the latter disdained to have their chains forged out of their own native metals, and on their own native soil, having them adjusted on their limbs by a foreign importation of officers and soldiers, who had no direct interest in the country, but to speculate ever at the expense of the Colonists.

In the year 1813, a Creole Congress was formed, composed of delegates from different departments, at Chilpanzingo, in the month of September, that declared Mexico independent of Spain, breaking that filial allegiance and homage which had so long cemented them as one body politic, and which a pure regard for natural rights could no longer endure.

After the long period of twelve years, and meeting with a diversity of misfortunes and successes during this transition of time, another Congress of Creole delegates assembled in the month of February, 1822, in order to settle the principles of a constitution; and in most every essential requisite, it was based upon the broad grounds embraced in the constitution of the United States of America. After the lapse of two years, encountering many interruptions of a varied character, both foreign and domestic, it was adopted and proclaimed in the year 1824. The first Constitutional Congress convened January 1st, 1825, at the Capital, and held this year, in the month of August, an extraordinary session.

It is said that the form of government of the Mexican Republic is the popular, representative, and federal, in the conception of its characteristics; and that the general government of the federation is divided into two branches, viz: that of a Chamber of Deputies, and that of Senators. The Deputies are chosen by the majority of qualified citizens to vote in each State and Territory,—one for every fifty thousand, or for a fraction not less than twenty-five thousand citizens. It is also requisite to have arrived at the age of twenty-five years, and to enjoy the ample exercise of citizenship, in order to hold this office. The Chamber of Deputies is said to be wholly renewed every two years; and that a Deputy shall hold no office of trust, while serving in the National Congress, according to the Constitu-

tional Compact. Two Senators are elected in each State, by the majority of the citizens; two in the Federal District, which includes the city of Mexico; and an equal number with that of the States are elected, in turn, by the Senate, the Supreme Court, and the Chamber of Deputies; which decides the election of such as do not obtain the votes of all three, but such as have been voted for by some one of them. And in order to be eligible to this office, it is necessary to have arrived at thirty years of age, and to be in the full exercise of the rights of citizenship; also, it is further necessary to have held some office of high trust, no less than that of Superior Chief of the Treasury. This Chamber is one-third renewed every two years. In each Chamber, a quorum is formed by one more than half of the members. Senators, during the term of their office, shall hold no other positions of trust in the Republic at the same time.

To be eligible to the office of President, it is necessary to be a native citizen, thirty-five years of age, and a resident. The executive power of the Republic is invested in a President and four Secretaries chosen by himself for the dispatch of the four branches of the public administration, viz: Interior and Foreign Relations; Justice and Ecclesiastical Affairs; Treasury; War and Marine Concernments. These Secretaries must be native citizens; the President is chosen for four years.

The Judicial Power of the Republic resides in a Supreme Court, three Circuit Courts, and those of the District. The Supreme Court is divided into three Halls, comprising, in all, eleven Ministers of Justice and one Fiscal. Besides these, for civil and criminal trials of the First Instance, there are Judges and Constitutional Alcaldes. To be eligible to the office of Supreme Judge, it is necessary to be learned in the law, a native citizen, and approved by the National Legislature. The State Judiciary are appointed

by the respective Governors, and confirmed by their Legislatures.

The interior Government of the Mexican organized Territories resides in a political Chief, dependent on the general government of the nation; in a Deputation elected by the citizens thereof; and also, in the inferior Courts necessary for the administration of justice. And for this purpose, they are divided into districts, counties, or departamentos, or partidos, which are under the charge of prefects or subprefects, appointed by the Governors.

In all towns of any importance, there are Ayuntamientos, charged with the police of safety and good order, having their jurisdiction extended over the neighboring villages and estates.

The State Governments are divided into three powers, viz: the Legislative, Executive, and Judiciary. Every Mexican by birth or by naturalization, and twenty-one years of age, is a citizen of the Mexican United States, except guilty of some crime. Personal securities are granted by the constitution of the United States of Mexico, in the same manner as by that of the United States of America. The Mexican constitution declares that the national religion shall be the Catholic, Apostolic, or Roman. The clergy have their special legislation; the army has its code, known as Ordenanza; the armed force of Mexico is reputed to number nine thousand men; although some say four times that number. The number of officers of the general government amounts to two thousand, nine hundred and ninety, and of pensioners, to nine hundred and forty. The number of Ecclesiastics rises to three thousand two hundred and thirty; of Convents of Monks, to one hundred and forty; Convents of Nuns, to sixty; and of Colleges of the Propaganda Fide, to eight; while the monastaries contain one thousand, one hundred and forty monks; the nunneries one

thousand, five hundred and forty professed nuns; seven hundred and forty girls; and eight hundred and eighty female servants. The annual revenues of the clergy from various taxation, amount to near ten millions of dollars. Heretofore, it has been extremely difficult to ascertain the amount of the estates of the clergy, from the fact they would evade the general registry law of the *land office*; but under the sway of Comonfort, and in case of their estates not being registered at a certain time, the Law-Lerdo or the law of the twenty-fifth of June, 1856, or otherwise, the law for the sale of corporation properties, for it is known by all these names, has been the great work of this government, and already it has brought to light and life in the land, an element as strong as the one it combats.

Since the period, 1825, to the present time, with scarcely a year's peace; with laws unequally enforced, and as often evaded, when large amounts of money are at issue; with a Congress and Clergy that tax almost the vital breath which the poorer classes inhale; with no ambition to improve the country in any of the varied senses of that term, nor to advance themselves generally as a nation of sentient individuals, in the arts and sciences, contributing thereby to national greatness; with mines, forests, and soil, abounding in natural wealth, but with scarcely any desire to tax themselves in the endeavor to superintend and cultivate all of these indigenous fields, in order to bear them the golden harvests, increasing their riches and individual standing; with a government ever changing, and jealous of foreigners and capitalists, making, at times, large concessions and granting exclusive privileges, and at other times, annulling them as being injurious to the body politic, and ever watchful, in this last effort, to make these chartered companies forfeit what they had invested, thereby receiving the spoils of investments; with a constitution and laws which draw

no distinction between colors, thereby placing the untutored red man of the forests and the sons of Africa on equal terms with the fair descendants of the Castilian race, and thereby advancing these mixed castes at the expense of lessening themselves; moreover, especially by intermarriages: what country, in view of all these national evils, misfortunes, misrule, anarchy in its worst form, duties and taxation upon what flows into the country, almost without a parallel in the annals of civilized nations; embezzlements of public treasure under appointments to fill high stations; systems of espionage both civil and ecclesiastical, enough to subvert the best constituted form of government, which man can conceive, and having had so many calamities at home, for so long a time; filled with intestine foes, and surrounded by wily foreigners, could have survived so effectually her volcanic throes, till now, except Mexico? Notwithstanding, how has she survived? how does she rank in the progress of the events of nations? Who are her immortal statesmen and patriots? Who are her historians and annalists? Who are her civilians, surgeons, physicians, merchants and mechanics? What fields have her scholars and artists surveyed and brought to light? and finally, how have her generals and soldiers distinguished themselves, as if tactics and simple evolutions, constituted true courage?

If wisdom, prudence, sagacious management, and a spirit of reconciliation, be deeply implanted in the active, liberal and determined mind of President Comonfort, surrounding himself with discretion, integrity, and faithfulness in the discharge of trusts, and appointing to important stations, moreover especially, Custom Houses for the reception and inspection of foreign merchandise, such as have distinguished themselves by some known and acknowledged merit of their own acquirement;—the Republic of Mexico may yet be a proud nation, by falling back to the primordial principles

which embrace the contour of the constitution of the United States; developing and improving her internal resources and natural positions; establishing free toleration in religious matters, and the common school system throughout the country; and abnegating the colored races the right of suffrage, thereby excluding them from the wake of political influence and aspirants, but granting them ample protection in the security of their lives, conceded liberties, and property; and in pursuance of these points she may cause her sons to be respected, among all foreign nations, not so much from their own worth, as from the greatness of the nation whose characteristics they represent.

To establish peace, security and prosperity to the country, and to arrest and subdue that ladrone-like spirit so common in Mexico, should be among the first offices which a good and wise government peforms to her people, as tending to extend and increase her population in distant parts, away from the confines of towns and cities.

When visiting the region of Tepic, in March, 1856, I was informed that a band of ladrones of more than five hundred strong, had assembled in that vicinity, committing devastations too generally upon property and individuals, appropriating their stores of provisions and other valuables, and even giving terms of peace to the city of Tepic, of more than twelve thousand inhabitants.

So far as I was able to discover personally, and by conversation with intelligent Mexicans, I should judge, from the configuration of this country, being, as it is, diversified by hills and dales, by mountains and gulches, and by continuous ridges and deep ravines, that the Republic on the western slope of the Mexican Cordillera abounded quite generally in the precious metals; and that there is manifested a strong spirit with regard to working both the silver and gold mines embraced in these regions; but the want of

general confidence has, for many years, prevented capitalists and industry from investing, to any great extent, their means in so tangible a form as to be susceptible of being taxed or attached by the government, when in straightened circumstances; alleging that the prior administration had no constitutional power to concede such privileges, as are contained in the inducements which *she* frequently holds out to win the inexperienced. Those which are worked in Sonora, Cinaloa, Jalisco, Durango, Guanajauto, Zacatecas, Michoacan, and Oajaca, seem, by the best reports I was able to derive information from in this respect, to be somewhat resuscitating from their past prostration and unproductiveness, since the commencement of the Mexican revolution.

From the most reliable information coming within my reach, the population of the Republic of Mexico is computed to embrace eight millions, while the classes of society are singularly varied, and known by distinctions more striking than those observable in other countries. Here are four more distinct, and almost more alien classes to each other, than as if they were a separate people, actuated by the strongest sentiments of national rivalry. These classes are native Spaniards, Creoles or Spaniards born in America, the mixed Castes, and Indians. The number of the first class is computed at eighty thousand; that of the second at one million, five hundred thousand; that of the third at two millions, five hundred thousand; and that of the fourth at three millions, nine hundred and twenty thousand. The first class generally appear better informed, more industrious and more highly bred than the Creoles, and in all respects, except native questions, far more liberal; and as merchants, active, enterprising and honorable; and towards strangers, courteous and obliging; and many of these remarks are not inapplicable to the Creoles, whom I should judge, notwithstanding, to be fonder of splendor and riding

on fine horses richly comparisoned. In this respect, the mixed castes lag not far behind, inasmuch as they are able to imitate. The manners, habits, and customs of this people, I have already alluded to in my prior letters.

In this Republic wealth is unevenly distributed; consequently, education is little promoted, except, as it were, among a privileged few; and even these, after having received a liberal education, seem to relapse into their old habits and customs with but seldom making an effort to distinguish themselves by any patriotic or scholastic services to the promotion of the best interests of their own country. Commerce is chilled by enormous high duties, and the middling and poorer classes are egregiously taxed and impoverished by this government system of chicanery; agriculture is fettered and made the tool of the government by the establishment of *las Garitas;* manufactures and mining are viewed with a jealous eye by those in power if in want of money; and in this case, some new invention of taxation is frequently resorted to in order to effect this end, as the government is ever needy; public improvements of whatsoever nature and character, are kept far in the back ground of other countries; and general education, even among the wealthy Creoles, is frowned down, as being not the sacred nucleus around which the sons and daughters of ancient Anahuac should now assemble to celebrate, in joyous festivity, the birth of their national Independence!

The Indians resemble in their general features and appearance, and in their facial contours, the aborigines found in other parts of America; having copper color, flat and smooth hair, short beard, squat bodies, long eyes with the corners turning up towards the temples, prominent cheek bones, thick lips, and an expression of gentleness in the mouth, strongly contrasted with their gloomy and severe looks.

The Gadsden Purchase, in the northern portion of the

Republic of Mexico, produced at the time of its transfer quite a sensation of discontent, especially among a class of politicians then opposed to the conceding administration, and also in the more northern States of the Republic; however, when I was at Mazatlan, that seemed to have died away in view of the anticipated protection being extended to them by an United States' settlement and military posts established on the line. This territory is reputed to abound in rich mines of gold and silver; and also of copper, worth eighty or ninety per cent., as represented to me by old Mexicans who had, years ago, explored that region of country, with views solely bent on making discoveries of mineral wealth. These explorers alleged, as the causes of their discoveries not having been much worked up to the period of the purchase by the United States, the expense and the extreme difficulty of getting provisions, and also the deadly hostility of the Indian tribes, who roamed and swept over that country, bidding defiance, except to the ramparts of military tactics.

This Purchase is computed to embrace a geographical area of near forty thousand square miles, measuring from east to west four hundred and seventy miles, and on an average eighty and a half miles from north to south. Much has been said with reference to the bad taste and policy of the United States government making and endorsing the Gadsden Purchase, and perhaps the amount paid for it may, to a casual observer, seem extravagant. However, in the consummation of this national acquisition, there were two great and prominent objects in view. The first and paramount, was to obtain through amicable offices and negotiations, a release from an obligation entered into at the confirmation of the Hidalgo treaty with Mexico, stipulating that the United States should protect the northern borders of this Republic from the inroads and depredations of the

Indian hordes living north of the boundary line. And the second was the acquirement of a territory which, viewed in every light and consideration, should, the seasons round, most promote the interest and commerce of the United States and the world at large; presenting in the bleak months of winter, scarcely any obstacles to continuous traveling, without coming constantly in contact with heavy frosts and snow heaped upon heaps.

No man's reason or motives, in view of a national Railroad, should be so obtuse and selfish as to adopt a route which might carry with it the weighty objections of northern railroads in the winter season, compared to the perceptible advantages of those constructed in the more southern portions of the American Union. For this great national route should have no fetters to bind or retard travel and commerce one moment of time, in the event of such an enterprise being completed; as Europe and Asia will look upon this thoroughfare in the light of that Golden Link which, like the heart to the human system, must constantly vibrate.

This probable route, occupying intermediate points, is proposed to leave el Rio Grande at a place called Franklin, near a town by the name of El Paso, and running westwardly to a point called Colorado City. From a view of this route, both geographically and topographically, upon the best charts descriptive of this Purchase, and from my conversation at Mazatlan with intelligent Mexicans and foreigners respecting this proposed route, I discovered that after it leaves los Pasos of the Pinal and San Pedro mountains, there are two routes proposed, giving the inner surface the form of an ellipsis, and coming to a focus near Colorado City. The lower or more southern of these routes, seems to present a much straighter line, and with no more apparent obstacles to surmount in the construction of this

national enterprise than in the upper one; a few mountain ridges and spurs obstructing the champaign aspect of the country. However, through these, Passes have been discovered to form the level tract and lay the iron band.

In the southern portion of the Purchase, there are ten small villages or towns, from which settlements radiate, graze and produce, though at the fearful hazard of Indian encroachments and spoilations. A few miles west of the center of the Purchase, there are situated two copper mountains called Sierra de Ajo, and La Montaña de Pajaro; the former seventy-five and the latter fifty miles south of el Rio de Gila. Other portions of the Purchase are said to abound with this metal, equally as easy of transit and shipment as the localities alluded to. The rich ore of these mountains I have already mentioned, which, from the reputed abundance of that metal, and the short distance that it becomes necessary to pack it, one would suppose might and will create an eminently remunerative field for the investment of capital and industry, in order to accomplish their most desired ends.

Conversing with H. S. Washburn, United States Deputy Surveyor, in the early part of April of this year, (1857,) with reference to the Gadsden Purchase, and also my publication of a Work descriptive of Western Mexico, he informed me that he would look over his notes relative to that Purchase, and furnish me such material information from them, as might tend to throw light upon that region of country. The following embraces the promised sketch from his notes:

"It was on the 2nd day of July, A. D., 1856, that I crossed the Rio Colorado, about one mile below the mouth of the Rio Gila, for the purpose of examining in person so much of that country, generally known under the title of 'Gadsden Purchase,' as my limited time would permit. I

took with me but one man and three mules. After crossing the Colorado, I took the road leading north, and soon found myself traveling eastward in the valley on the south side of the Gila. For the first fifteen miles, the alluvial portion of the valley on the south side of the river, is from one to six miles in width. At this point the river comes near washing the foot hills on the south, which are rugged and barren. These hills are, however, soon passed, when the valley is found to expand to rather more than its previous width, and continues gradually to widen so far as I ascended it. At twenty-five miles, there has recently been discovered a rich copper mine, a short distance from the river. At sixty miles, the road leading to the Arizona copper mines leads off to the south. At ninety miles, lie bleaching among the rocks the bones of the Oatman family, killed by the Indians in the year 1850. At one hundred and ten miles, is the murderer's grave, concerning which there is a tale of something like half tragedy and half 'a la Vigilance,' which occurred in 1849. At one hundred and fifty miles, I came to the Maricopa villages; ten miles further are the Pimo villages; and twelve miles further, the road leaves the river and turns south towards Tucson.

"So far, the soil of the first or alluvial bottoms of the Gila is, beyond all question, of extreme richness and fertility, peculiarly adapted to the production of sugar cane, cotton, tobacco, and all our southern staples and fruits; and I am of opinion that the coffee tree could be cultivated here advantageously; but of this I am not certain. That portion of the Gila below the Maricopas, does not appear to be the home of many of the grasses; but it is from no fault, or rather no want of a good soil. Weeds, bushes of various kinds, mezquit undergrowth, and, on the banks of the river, large cottonwoods, with willows, grow most exuberantly. There is always some grass, but not enough to

justify me in saying that it is a good stock country. The domestic grasses would no doubt do well. The river itself is about one hundred yards wide, with an average depth, at that time, of two feet, and abounds in fish of an excellent quality; while in the valley there is plenty of deer, antelope, goats and quail, with not a habitation of either Indians or white men to disturb them, from Fort Yuma to the Maricopa villages. Among the Indians, this is considered neutral ground; nor do any but lawless marauders infringe upon or violate this neutrality. Thus it is that circumstances have cleared the way for an early settlement of this valley. Think but for a moment of the vast amount of our great southern staples and other produce that this valley is capable of growing; one hundred and fifty miles long by an average of three miles in width on the south side of the river, with as much more on the north side in New Mexico. This would give an area of nearly six hundred thousand acres of the first quality of tillable land, with every facility for irrigation when needed. The banks of the river are very low, and the water can be taken out in ditches at nearly every mile.

"There are two rainy seasons—one in winter (light rains,) and one in summer (heavy showers through the months of June, July, August and September.) The climate appears to be healthy, but the heat in summer is excessive.

"The scenery is grand and attractive, and at the same time, forbidding. On either side of the valley, below the Maricopa villages, rise high, ragged, broken, precipitous, rocky, volcanic mountains, that look as if they had but yesterday ceased burning. Spread out between them is a valley, presenting the appearance of a magnificent lawn in all its verdure. The contrast is easier imagined than described.

"We were well treated by the Maricopas and Pimos.

They raise corn, pumpkins, *brooms* and melons in great abundance; also *cotton*, from which they weave cloth and make their own clothing. With them ignorance is bliss. They have nothing, to all appearance, to disturb them, but are the embodiments of contentment—strangers to trouble and vice; they know nothing of the pangs and misery produced by hankering, craving and striving after the *almighty dollar*. Physically, they are tall, well formed, athletic, and active, but indolent. If our every-day fault-finders, grumblers and chronic growlers at their hard lot would but pay these simple natives a visit, and apply the lesson, it would certainly pay them an hundred fold to take the journey.

"The rains here are more frequent than below, and the elevation is already becoming quite evident from the temperature. The country is also becoming covered with an excellent quantity of grass. Above these villages, the Gila country to its sources is an excellent stock country. Near its sources are said to be extensive pineries, and if true, lumber can be easily brought down the river for building and other purposes.

"After resting here two days, I turned south towards Tucson. At forty miles, I came to Pioache Peak, at the foot of which is a valley, or basin, where the water collects in ponds during the rainy season, thus refreshing the weary traveler and his faithful beast of burthen while on their lonely and tiresome journey to the before mentioned town. The soil of this valley is rich, and the grass excellent and abundant. Mezquit timber is plenty. The country hence to the river is rather undulating, with a soil of good appearance, but not producing any but occasional patches of mezquit, with an oasis of grass here and there presented to view. The Pioache mountain is the highest point of land for some distance around, and from its summit a most

excellent view can be obtained. In nearly every direction are to be seen detached or isolated mountains, which at first lead one to the conclusion that this surrounding country is very mountainous, but traveling further on he is soon disabused of this idea, by finding that these mountains occupy but a small portion of the country, the remainder being level or gently rolling. The Gadsdonian copper mine is located about twenty-five miles to the southeast of this point. The country from this place descends to the southward, but in other features, growth, etc., is much the same as that between the Pioache and the Gila for about twenty-five miles, when I was fairly in the valley of Tucson. Hence it is fifteen miles to the town, before arriving at which, I met a party of fifteen Americans endeavoring to intercept a band of Apaches *en route* for their homes, with *una Cabalgada* of stolen horses from Sonora. The expedition proved successful; one hundred and eighty head of horses and mules were captured from the Indians. The victors and their booty were received by the citizens with manifestations of joy. As it is the custom in this country on such occurrences, the animals were declared a legal prize. After indulging in a general tumult of rejoicings, and receiving the congratulations of many a fair Señorita, an effort was made to divide the spoils among those who had taken a hand in the expedition. In this they could not agree, so every man concluded to pitch in and help himself. The result was some got as many as fifteen while others got none.

"This valley is very extensive, being twenty-five or thirty miles in width, east and west, and from seventy to eighty miles north and south. It is known in different places by different names, and connects on the northeast with the San Pedro Valley, and thence with that of the Gila. It also branches off on the southwest and connects with other

valleys leading to Sonoita, and thence to the Gulf of California. On the east and southeast it connects again with the San Pedro Valley, the Santa Cruz Valley, and others which lead either to the Rio Grande or the head waters of the San Ignacio, and los Rios Yaqui and Mayo in Sonora. A large portion of this valley possesses a soil of unsurpassing richness, but it is wanting in running streams of water. I am of opinion that artesian wells, when tried in this valley, will prove successful, and if so, of course must be of incalculable value. Tucson is situated on a small creek which runs but a short distance below the town and sinks in the sand. There are no other running streams near here but that are dry a portion of the year. The town has a population of near one thousand souls, mostly Sonorians. It is built of adobes and is in the usual dilapidated condition of other Mexican towns. Previous to the Purchase it was a military station or fort, and was the only point, except San Xavier, in the northern part of Sonora and not on the Rio Grande, that the Mexican army was able to hold against the attacks of Apaches. All other places, as Sopori, Arrivaca, Tubac, Calaboyas, Babacomori, Tumacacari, Los Alamos, and many other haciendas have been long since deserted.

"There is a small church in the town of Tucson, built by a single individual, who expended his last dollar in its construction, as an offering to his God for his providential delivery from the hands of the Apaches. There is a small grist mill, one mile outside of the town, which does a fair business. There are four or five stores doing a moderate trade. There are enough Americans to protect the place, and to form the nucleus of a flourishing settlement. Wheat, barley, and other cereals are sown in January and harvested in May. As soon as the summer rains commence, usually about the middle of June, corn is planted on the

same ground, and a good crop is raised in favorable locations without irrigation, thus raising two crops a year upon the same ground. Cotton, sugar-cane, tobacco, and most of the fruits of the temperate climates do well. I saw here a specimen of virgin iron considerably larger and nearly of the form of a large anvil. It is said to be susceptible of being cut and wrought into any form desired, as it is. It was brought from a mountain of the same material, about forty miles distant. The mines and the Apaches are the chief topics of conversation. The former are looked upon as yet in embryo, but as a sure fortune to all as soon as they get strong enough to repel and punish the attacks of the latter. The Papago Indians appear to be quite numerous, raise the crops usual among Indians, and have some produce to sell; and they also trade off considerable gold dust. They are peaceable and friendly. The climate in this valley is much more humid than that of California. I remained in Tucson about ten days; nearly every day there were frequent showers of rain, intermingled with intervals of sunshine. Vegetation is consequently very rank, aside from which there are no local causes to induce fevers. The climate is, I think, salubrious, and the temperature much lower than in the valley of the Gila. The principal rains are in summer. The grass and other vegetation are green nearly nine months in the year—nearly twice as long as in the State of California.

"Leaving Tucson and continuing up the valley nine miles, I came to the Mission of San Xavier. This Mission was built in a very early day by the Spanish Government, at an expense of $33,300, under the direction of the Jesuits. The original cost was afterwards entirely refunded by these Jesuits, in produce, principally wheat, raised by the labor of the Indians. At one time the annual production of wheat alone was ten thousand fanegas, or twenty-five thou-

sand bushels. The Mission building, or Cathedral, is built entirely of brick and appears of the usual style and size as those in California, at Santa Barbara, San Gabriel and San Louis Rey. In the interior of the Mission the images and paintings are, as well as the whole building, in a wonderful state of preservation, but the outside buildings have very much fallen into decay. There was only one family (Señor Castro's) living at this place. They were in constant fear from the Apaches; every day expecting that that one would be their last. The fertility of this valley is unsurpassed, whether it be for arable or stock raising purposes. Thirty miles south are some fine pineries with good mill sites, and plenty of water. The lands are believed to be principally public. What more desirable locality can the emigrant reasonably expect?

"From San Xavier to Sopori it is thirty miles; still in the same valley, or rather a tributary valley to the one in which are Tucson and San Xavier. It was on this road, about two weeks previous, that the Apaches surprised four men and murdered them for blood alone, as they were found without even a garment being taken from their bodies. The soil is everywhere rich, producing a luxuriant growth of grass, and in many places a heavy growth of mezquit timber, which is also loaded with beans, of which cattle and horses are as fond as of barley or corn. This fruit is called mezquit beans from its resemblance to the field bean in the pod, and is by many considered as valuable for stock as grain. A Col. Douglass, in connection with W. B. Roads and ——Dodson, have taken up this rancho, (Sopori,) and intend holding it by pre-emption. There can be no better country for stock, while there is also plenty of good tillable land. They have here a silver mine which they are working with sanguine anticipations of its ultimately yielding them a fortune.

"To give some idea of the character of this mine, which may or may not be a fair sample of the hundred other mines that have been abandoned in the Gadsden Purchase, I will here give an extract from a letter received this date from my worthy friend and acquaintance, Wm. B. Roads, Esq., formerly of Stockton, California, and known to many of the citizens of this place. His letter is dated December 30th, 1856, and reads thus:

"'At last, about six weeks since, the troops arrived under command of Major Stein. Tucson he did not think a proper place for encampment, and so he went to Calabazas rancho, to the great disappointment of all the Tucson fellows, the most of whom have gone to Tubac to take up land for raising a crop for the next year. Provisions are very high. Wheat is worth two dollars and fifty cents per bushel; corn and barley, five cents per pound; potatos, ten cents per pound, and not to be had at that, even for seed. From all appearances, all kinds of produce will keep up to present prices for more than a year to come. Store goods are sold at the California prices of 1849. Cattle are very high, and will be worth more here than at any place in the west. Most of the old ranchos are destroyed by the Indians, but if those in command of the troops here do as they say they will, we will soon be rid of these plagues—then will be the time to take up land in this country. There are some old Spanish titles which will doubtless hold good, and there are also Mexican titles or grants for nearly every foot of the remaining fertile portion of the Purchase, which are regarded as counterfeit and given by illegal authorities, and will not hold. It seems that the officers of this command have commenced to speculate in real estate.

"'About mining we have good prospects before us. Scarcely a week passes but what we hear of some new discovery, and still there are very few prospecting. Next

year we will see many a mine worked to advantage, and on a more substantial basis than the placer diggings of California ever have, or ever can be worked. Col. Douglass, Dodson and myself are now at the Sopori rancho, working a silver mine, only one mile from water and timber, (the same as we were preparing to work when you were down here,) containing metal in abundance, which yields as it comes from the vein, when worked with quicksilver, ten marks, or eighty dollars to the three hundred pounds. Gold is scattered all through the vein. Besides us there are two other mining companies. One at Tubac and one at San Xavier, both of them seem to be satisfied with their mines.

"'Not long since the Indians made their appearance again, but we hope the almighty arm of the United States will protect us from these thieving scoundrels. Come out here and see how things look now. You would not leave here without making one or another good speculation.

"'WM. B. ROADS.'

"Fifteen miles further I came to the Arrivaca Rancho (deserted.) Nature here certainly strained every energy and device to make a paradise on earth, or rather a place for a paradise; for a more lovely, enchantiug spot I never saw. No description can convey any idea of its beauty, or of its rare and unsurpassed advantages for farming and stock raising purposes. The elevation is such as to render the climate as charming and desirable as the other qualities just described. It is covered by a Spanish grant for three square leagues, said to be genuine. There is an old, deserted silver mine near by.

"Passing from Arrivaca, I turned more to the south, and leaving the valley I entered rolling hills. At ten miles, I came to the Sonora line, and at twenty miles further I came

to the Busini Rancho, also deserted, and this is another specimen of nature's efforts at perfection. I saw this day the first wild turkey since I have been on the Pacific coast. Deer and antelope are very numerous. Fifteen miles to the north-east is the Agua Caliente silver mine, where the famous 'planchas de la plata' were found upon the surface of the ground, one of which brought over seven hundred dollars.

"Leaving the Busini Rancho, a mile or two brought me to the Agua Caliente creek, down which stream I continued to Tubatama, a distance of thirty miles, and the first habitable place I had seen since leaving San Xavier. To this place the valley of the Agua Caliente is generally narrow, well timbered, and very fertile. The back country is broken and rolling, but generally well adapted to the raising of stock. Tubatama contains a population of about six hundred inhabitants. They are hospitable, but with one or two exceptions miserably poor. Although the soil when cultivated, produces most generously of everything from sugar-cane down to a radish, they barely raise a sufficiency to subsist upon. A more indolent, timid, miserably useless race of beings I never met with. There was not a pound of meat in the place, and most thankfully did they receive from me a present of venison ham, killed that day upon the road. At this point the valley becomes much broader, and the surrounding country less broken.

"Continuing down the same valley, I came to Altar, a distance of thirty miles. It is situated near the junction of the Agua Caliente and San Ignacio rivers. In this distance of thirty miles I passed many settlements. The valley continues fertile and everywhere rewards richly the labors of the husbandman. Altar is a town of some importance, and has been the centre of a considerable trade. It is built of adobes, and some of the buildings present a neat appear-

ance, but decay is much more frequently reflected from everything in the shape of a tenement. Here comes the inquiry, wherefore is all this decay and ruin, this indolence and want of energy to develope a country unsurpassed in climate and natural resources, unless it be to hasten forward the day when the stars and stripes shall float over these crumbling walls, and infuse into everything under its folds the same spirit of progress and reform and civilization that has ever fallen from its presence? Nature, civilization and humanity to that helpless and effeminate race, all speak in unmistakable signs for such a result. Why should our Government longer stay behind herself? The town has a population of about six thousand; generally, miserably poor and indolent, but withal, as it is usual for them under any circumstances—very contented. Their wants are few and easily satisfied. They instinctively see their fate, and quietly submit with resignation. The climate is delightful; many of the tropical products and fruits flourish. I was very hospitably and kindly entertained during my stay of two days.

"Time now admonished me that I must set my course homeward, and taking the most direct route in a north-west course, I came the first day only to the Laguna Rancho, a distance of twelve miles, passing through a level country with rich soil and a good growth of grass, with but little water, which continues nearly to Sonio, a town sixty miles distant from Altar. Sonio is a small mining town, situated near the line between the Purchase and Sonora, in the latter, and has a population approaching two or three hundred inhabitants. They are the most industrious community I have seen, and prosecute their mining operations in their rude way with considerable energy. Gold is the principal mineral sought, but several very rich specimens of silver

were shown to me, and the owner of the mine of which some of these specimens were representatives, would sell an interest for sixty thousand dollars. Judging from the specimens shown me, it must be a very rich mine. Agriculture is here entirely neglected. The country has already become more rugged, with a poorer soil than heretofore. Water is also scarce. I was drenched with rain on the evening of my arrival (Aug. 2d,) in a severe thunder-shower. The same hospitality was extended me here as usual among the Sonorians.

"Leaving Sonio, the road follows but a short distance to the left, and nearly in the same direction as the boundary line between the Purchase and Sonora, to Zonoita, a small town of two hundred inhabitants, sixty miles distant from Sanio. The country is generally rolling, or sometimes, quite broken, and destitute of water, but in many places has the appearance of a good soil. There is a fine running stream here, but the first water reached in approaching the village are some ponds of alkali, strong enough to kill stock if suffered to drink much of it. Zonoita derivés its importance chiefly from its proximity to the Arizona copper mines, forty miles distant, in a north-east direction. There is considerable intercourse and trade between the denizens of the former and the agents and laborers of the latter.

"I am not able to give you a just and accurate description of these mines, and I will only say that the ore is rich (from forty to ninety per cent. pure metal,) and inexhaustible. It is fifty-six miles by land from the mines to the Gila, whence it may be shipped in flat-boats to Fort Yuma, or the Gulf, and thence direct to any market in the world. Sixty per cent. ore is worth three hundred and eighty dollars per ton. From this data the curious can work out their own figures.

"Zonoita and its vicinity are well watered, and since the opening of the Arizona mines by the present company, have been allowed by the Apaches to prosper. The consequence is that the earth is made to yield her annual harvests of corn, wheat, etc., etc., while horses, cattle, sheep, etc., are allowed to gladden the hearts of their owners, and to multiply and increase in comparative security.

"From this place to Fort Yuma it is one hundred and fifty miles, with permanent water only the first fifteen miles. The remaining one hundred and thirty-five miles is frequently without a drop of water *via* the Tinaja Alta route. One season as many as thirteen persons perished in attempting to make this journey. The country is uninhabited, and in many places destitute of grass. There is nothing on this route to describe, unless it be the Tinjas Altas (high tanks.) These tanks are at a distance of sixty miles from Fort Yuma, and are a series of natural tanks, worn out in the rocks by the water descending from a high table-land, down a steep bluff of granite rock of full three hundred feet on to the plain below. In this descent the water has washed out, or there are formed in the rocks, nine successive tanks, one above the other, which in the rainy season fill with water that either evaporates or is drunk by wild animals, or the stock passing to and from the river. The lower tank only is accessible for any of our domestic animals, and when exhausted, the water has to be passed down in buckets from the tanks above. This operation is both slow and dangerous. One person whom I know, was thus crippled for life. Hence to Fort Yuma the road passes ovor a level country without another drop of water."

The mezquit beans are ground into flour by the native Indians, which has a sickish sweetness. The fruit of the *petahaya resembles* the pulp of figs, and has something of

the same taste mingled with that of raspberry. Of that fruit the Indians manufacture molasses.

Adios,

Señor,

AGRICOLA.

CINCINNATUS.

LETTER L.

Productions varying in Mexico as the Altitude varies—Indigenous Productions—Bamboos in Vera Paz—Ancient Ruins north of the Gila mentioned by Garces—Ruins of the Casas Grandes, on the Gila—Pimo Gold—Arispe in Sonora—Its importance—Silver Mine near Alamos, also in the State of Sonora—Fort Yuma—Bottom Lands of the Colorado River, below the junction with the Gila—Old Mission Buildings—Gulf of California explored by Alarchon in 1540—Salinas River, North Branch of the Gila—Ruins near—Pimos noted for Agriculture—Bottom Lands on the Gila, near Las Casas Grandes—Description of these Houses—Their Origin—Tucson, its Productions and Fruits—Irrigating Canals—View of the Country from Guadalupe Pass—Natural History of the Gadsden Purchase—Practicability of a Railroad through the Purchase—States of the Mexican Federation Embraced in this Work—Inducements in these—What this Portion of Mexico Needs—Emblazoning the Escutcheon of the Nation—Her Patriot—Number of Mines Formerly Worked—Regions where they now Exist—Annual Product of all the Mines in Mexico—Quicksliver—Primitive Rocks abounding in Gold Veins—Superstructure of Porpheries containing rich Deposits of Gold—Deposits of Rock Salt in Oajaca—Geographical Recapitulation of the Western Portion of Mexico First, Lower California—General Description of—Second, Sonora—Description of—Guaymas, and its Destination—Its Harbor—Its Rainy Season—The Yaqui and Mayo Country—Productions—Railroad Route from El Paso to Guaymas—Healthy and Sickly Seasons—Its population—The Topographical Form of the Railroad Route—Ures—Houses—Legislative Hall—Architecture—Bottom Land of El Rio de Sonora—Its Extent—Hacienda of Don Gandera at Tapahui—Its Productions—Hermosillo—Its Valley—Its Population—Its Climate—Rivers, Sonora and San Miguel—Style of Architecture—Court Yards—The Alameda—Productions of the Hermosillo Valley—Its Fruits—Its Wine and Brandy—Its adaptability to the Culture of Fruits—The production of Wheat in the Central and Northern Portion of Sonora—Third, Cinaloa—Description of—Fourth, Jalisco—Description of—Lake Chapala—Fifth, Territory of Colima—Description of—Sixth, Michoacan—Description of—Seventh, Guerrero—Description of—El Puerto de Acapulco—Eighth, Oajaca—Description of—Ruins near Mitla—Ninth, Chiapa—Description of—Ruins of Palenque—Tenth, Chihuahua—Doscription of—Casas Grandes, on Las Casas Grandes River—Their Appearance—Their Antiquity—Their resembling those Houses in Ruins on the Gila River—Eleventh, Durango—Description of—Twelfth, Zacatecas—Description of—Thirteenth, Gaunajuato—Description of.

AMIGO MIO:—With reference to a miscellaneous retrospection of the capabilities and productions of Mexico, I

may here be permitted to mention her varied climate. The palm tribe abound as high as twelve thousand feet above the level of the sea; and on the confines of the temperate and torrid zones are cultivated the sugar cane, cotton, indigo, and cacao plants, at an elevation of eighteen hundred or twenty-four hundred feet. However, the sugar cane is successfully grown as high as six thousand feet in the valleys. The banana tree extends from the shores of the sea, to an elevation of four thousand, three hundred and fifty feet; while the temperate region from twelve hundred to six thousand, six hundred feet of elevation, presents the liquid amber styrax, and the laurel of Cervantes; and besides these, many other varieties of similar constitutional plants and trees. There are four varieties of Mexican oak, which commence at an elevation of twenty-eight hundred and twenty feet, and generally end at six hundred and twenty; and here may be seen the mountain yew, and the corrigated angular Banisteria. In an elevation of six thousand feet, and from this to fourteen thousand, one meets with the thick stemmed oak, the Mexican rose, the elder, the Mexican strawberry, the Datura superba, cardinal sage, the dwarf Potentilla, and the wonderful Cheirostemon platanoides. The pines, which commence in the temperate zone at an elevation of five thousand seven hundred feet, do not disappear till they reach the cold of twelve thousand feet. Mahis, the native name for maize, succeeds on the sea coast, and in the valleys of the Tolucca, at an elevation of eight thousand four hundred feet above the sea. Its production is commonly in the proportion of one hundred and fifty to one. It forms the principal nourishment both for man and animals.

Wheat, barley and the other grains of Europe, are cultivated to no extent, except on the 'plain which is situated in the temperate zone. Mexico produces indigenous spe-

cies of cherry, apple, walnut, mulberry, and silk worms. Bamboo is said to be grown in Vera Paz to the height of one hundred feet, and between the joints to be capable of holding twenty-five pounds of water; and no good reason can be adduced from this position, that the same will not grow equally as well in the territory of Tehuantepec, being in the same latitude and a difference of nearly four degrees of longitude.

It is a matter of history with the early fathers who traveled in Anahuac after its conquest, to have noted the remains of past ages in Indian towns and fortifications. And in view of this, the Father Garces found, in the country of the Moquis tribe on the Yaquesilia, a branch of the Colorado river, a town regularly built, containing houses of several stories, and large public squares. More to the south, on el Rio Gila, the same missionary discovered ruins of a kind of strong castle, with its sides arranged to the four cardinal points. The Indians who live in the vicinity of these ruins, inhabit populous villages and cultivate maize, cotton and calabash. These traces of ancient civilization, correspond with the traditions of the Mexicans, who affirm that their ancestors repeatedly halted in these regions after leaving the country of Aztlan. Their first station was on the banks of the lake Tequayo; their second station on the Gila river; their third in New Biscay, near the presidio of Yanos, where there are likewise the ruins of buildings, called by the Spaniards *casas grandes.*

The country of the Pimos, according to early writers, abounds in gold. This tribe was reduced to subjection and civilization by the Missionaries, but the Seris tribe (an Asiatic name) resisted their influence. Arispe in the State of Sonora, is a town of considerable importance, having a population of near ten thousand. Near Alamos, in the lower part of the State of Sonora, there is one among the

richest silver mines of the Republic, which is in the vicinity of el Rio Mayo, and about sixty miles from the Gulf of California. Fort Yuma is situated on the west side of the Colorado river, at the junction of this and the Gila river. It is now a military station for the United States troops, and is the contemplated terminus on the Colorado for the southern railroad coming to the several parts of California, San Diego and San Francisco. Rocky hills extend four or five hundred yards north of the junction, and between two and three miles south of it.

The bottom lands of the Colorado river below the junction, present characteristics of former cultivation, as canals or acequias are seen in many places. Of what age this may have been inhabited and thus cultivated, there is no record in history; perhaps, anterior to the coming of the Spaniards to the Western Continent.

Near Fort Yuma are seen the crumbling fragments of the old Mission buildings, erected by the early and pious Fathers to this Pagan land. As early as the year 1540, Fernando Alarchon, in a voyage to explore the Gulf of California by order of Antonio de Mendoca, Viceroy of New Spain, discovered the mouth of the Colorado river, which he then entered. The Salinas river, a northern branch of the Gila, abounds in cotton lands, and near it there are the ruins of architectural designs belonging to an age far in the past; though the tradition of the Indian tribes in this region, maintain that these, as well as the ruins above the Pimo villages, are the "houses of Montezuma." For Indians, the Pimos are quite noted for agricultural and grazing pursuits. They produce wheat, corn, beans, pumpkins, squashes, mezquit beans, and (their substitute for sugar) the fruit of the "petahaya."

The region of the Gila, not distant from the Salinas, and Rio Verde, a branch of the latter river, presents many for-

lorn pictures of departed ages, when it received the will and enterprise of a people far in advance of the different Indian tribes who presently inhabit the rich savannahs bordering on these streams. The bottom land of the Gila near *Casas Grandes*, or Great Houses, is about a mile wide and is thickly covered with mezquit trees from twelve to twenty feet high; and among which on the plain, the tall and graceful "petahaya," occasionally thrusts forth its thorny arms, like so many giant candelabra. These Houses comprise three buildings within a space of one hundred and fifty yards.

The larger one is in the best state of preservation; its four exterior walls and most of the inner ones remaining. The central portion or towers seems to be at least ten feet higher than the outer walls, as it rises from the foundation. The walls are composed of adobes made of mud or clay, and are four or five feet thick. From the present appearance, the inside walls were plastered with a hard finish, while the outside presents itself rather roughly. The inside surface has quite a polish, being composed from its aspect, of Mexican cement.

This building must have been, from the evidences which one beholds about it, at least four stories high. Doors connect most of the apartments; and besides, there are circular openings in the upper part of the chambers to admit air and light. The peculiarity, incident to the doors and windows or apertures for light, prevailing in the remains of ancient buildings in Central America, evinces itself with reference to the construction of las "casas grandes," near the Gila; and from analogy of reasoning, one might arrive at the same conclusion as to the settlement of each portion of the country by a people much alike and of one kindred origin. The erection of these monuments to have perpetuated a past age is shrouded in mystery; and as they now

appear, they were discovered by the first explorers of this region of country, who were informed by the Indians that they had been constructed five hundred years before.

Tucson nearly in the central portion of the Gadsden Purchase, is a town referred to by the early missionaries which was then, as now, a garrison. It stands on the plateau adjoining the fertile valley watered by the Santa Cruz River, a small stream which rises ten miles north-east of the town of Santa Cruz, whence it flows south to that place. Besides the cereals of the temperate zone, grapes, peaches, pears and apples are here cultivated. The bottom-lands are here nearly one mile in width, and are remarkably productive. Through them run irrigating canals in every direction, the demarcations of which are visible by the rows of cotton-woods and willows, which add a charm to the surrounding scenery. A view of the country from the height of Guadalupe Pass in the Gadsden Purchase is truly magnificent. Casting the eye around, one beholds the whole Pass with its defiles and mountains, its forests of oaks and pines, its deep gorges and grassy valleys; while in the center one sees presented a huge pile of rocks of a light green and whitish colors, which presents a pleasing contrast with the rich hue of the foliage around.

The natural history of the Gadsden Purchase presents its peculiarities in the mountains and along the streams, where forest trees and shrubbery abound. There one beholds the leopard, cougar, ocelot, lynx, panther; brown, black and grizzly bears; the fox, antelope, and various kinds of deer; the large wolf, the coyote, raccoon, skunk, marmot, weasel; a variety of moles, rats and mice, which live in the ground; and hares, rabbits, squirrels, and Rocky Mountain sheep, as well as the beaver.

There are also many species of reptiles which are considered poisonous; as the *horrid tarantula*, which lives in

the ground, covering its entrance with a trap-door; scorpions of different kinds, a black variety of which being remarkably fatal in its sting; centipede, venagroo, and alacran, very poisonous reptiles; and also the rattle-snake. The prairie dog abounds here on the plains and high table lands. The color of this animal is that of a light brown, and the lower part of its body, with its face and neck, is of a whitish yellow.

Of the practicability of a railroad I have already mentioned in a portion of this letter, from near El Paso of el rio Grande through the defiles of the Penal and San Pedro mountain ranges westwardly. These are local names for la Sierra Madre which pervades the Mexican Republic generally from the southeast to the northwest. The entire route from El Paso on the rio Grande to Colorado City presents no insurmountable obstacle. Here the river Colorado can be easily bridged, for it is only six hundred feet wide. From El Paso to Fort Yuma, I have already shown the practicability of a railroad; the other portions of it connecting the Atlantic States and the State of California, I will leave for different sections to regulate and, by conceding, concentrate their whole force against their formidable barrier in the *rock* of ages, la Sierra Nevada.

In the Mexican Confederation, the Department of Lower California, and the States of Sonora, Cinaloa, Guadalajara or Jalisco, the territory of Colima, the States of Valladolid or Michoacan, Guerrero, Oajaca, the territory of Tehuantepec, and the State of Chiapa; and nearly in the rear of the first three of these, the States of Chihuahua, Durango, Zacatecas, and Guanajuato, occupy my description of the Western Slope of this Republic; though having taken the main route of traveling in this region of the country, which I have the more minutely touched upon. Yet in doing this, I was often led aside from the *principal road*, to feast my

mind in beholding new objects, or in intelligent conversation, or to afford my reason a more ample scope to penetrate under the dark veil of the natural wealth abounding in these regions, or of Mexican Anarchy. Few of these States there are, which would not open to an industrious, well governed, and intelligent people, a far more magnificent field to operate in, than even the great State of California, either with respect to mineral resources, or grazing and agricultural wealth, yet to be developed.

This portion of Mexico wants the people, possessing the industry, enterprise and intelligence, so commonly visible in the Republic of the United States, in order to develop those latent properties of the earth, which a Wise Providence has laid up in store, to be measured out as great occasions and a great people, may seem to require. The soil, the forests, in dales, or on mountains, and the inner depths of those regions, essentially combine, to a great extent, all those natural elements, which, if sought after and *eked* out by capital well directed through sagacity and prudence, and under well organized and well administered government, would most eminently emblazon the fair escutcheon of national fame, causing the flag of this Republic to wave proudly on every ocean, and her embassadors to be deferently heard at every foreign court. Whereas, how is the case with Mexico? Is her fate among nations not nearly sealed? Shedding her *last tears* in the cause of patriotic liberty, her *patriot* has risen to wash her from her stains, and *fit* her for the *passage!* Comonfort!

While traveling in Mexico this year, 1856, the best information I was able to obtain as to the mines, was that the number of them both silver and gold rose formerly to three thousand; but that, owing to the incessant revolutions, a very few out of this number are now worked. The regions, containing those which I have now in mind, include Sonora,

Cinaloa, Jalisco, Oajaca, Guanajuato, Zacatecas, Durango, and Chihuahua; however, the amount of each annual yield of the precious metals, falls at present far short of the sum usually procured, when under Spanish dominion. In the city of Guadalajara, I was told that Sombrerete in Zacatecas, and Hostotipaguillo in the State of Jalisco, seemed to be paying as well as the Companies could reasonably expect, under the present circumstances, with respect to the revolutionary condition of the country. It is reported by good authority that the annual product of all the mines of Mexico, including the different metals, varies not much from twenty-six millions.

Within the bounds of the different States, there are many sources of copper, lead, iron and quicksilver. This metal abounds in some twenty-five different sources or mines, and its consumption is more than equal to the amount produced; a large demand being annually made upon the Almaden mines near San José, State of California. In conversing with intelligent Mexicans upon subjects connected with mining pursuits, I discovered that, in many of the primitive rocks, abounding in various regions of Mexico, there are found auriferous veins, as in those of the State of Oajaca; for here the granite breaks through the secondary or superincumbent formation of rocks, capping the summits of its mountain ranges. Gneiss, mica-slate, and syenite, extending from the central ridges to either coast, bear the same golden veins. Also, I discovered that the table-lands of much of this Republic indicate nothing more than superstructures of porpheries, embosoming, in an eminent degree, those rich deposits of precious metals, which have, since its discovery and conquest, so much distinguished this portion of America. And as accompaniments to these porphyritic rocks, in this respect, though perhaps in not so high a degree, old sandstone, clayslate, syenite, obsidian, serpentine,

amygdaloid, dolerite, and basaltic lavas, may fall under the same observation as to mineral wealth; notwithstanding, in parts of the country, as I have quite recently remarked, primitive rocks show their aged peaks, and that too, in no worthless form.

In the State of Oajaca, deposites of rock salt abound, and also, saline springs are seen emanating from them. The westerly portions of the States of Cinaloa, Jalisco, Vallidolid, Guerrero, Oajaca, the Territory of Tehuantepec and the State of Chiapa, possess as rich a soil, and as medium a climate, the same valuable forest trees, and to a great extent the same productions, as the Territory of Colima, with the same susceptibilities of development. The capabilities of this Territory, I have already enlarged upon in a previous letter.

In my recapitulation of the ground I have once been over in this Republic, in connection with communicating to you, Agricola, more definitely, matter which I obtained through the medium of intelligence and observation, I will draw your attention, in the first place, to Lower California. This Territory embraces an area of more than sixty thousand square miles, with a population of twelve thousand; its capital is La Paz, having a population of about five hundred. It is essentially volcanic, and is traversed throughout its whole length by la Sierra Nevada, in the same manner as the State of California.

The soil is generally not productive; however, at the base of the mountains, and in small valleys where the decomposition of lava has been going on for ages, it possesses an increditable fecundity. The scarcity of rivers in Lower California bars much its prosperity; and unless the Artesian well system can be successfully introduced, years will elapse ere it be generally *distinguished* for agriculture. The temperature is much milder than in the State of Cal-

ifornia; and the rains in winter are short, but severe, attended by fearful storms, which spread many times, general consternation in whole districts, leaving scarcely the fertile soil to tread upon. During the rains, the thermometer seldom falls below fifty degrees Fahrenheit.

The productions of this territory, are maize, manioc, wheat, beans, peas, and all kinds of esculent roots, excellent grapes, from which wine is made of a remarkable rich quality; oranges, lemons, limes, citrons, prunes, dates, figs, pine-apples, bananas, plantains, and other tropical fruit. Stock of various kinds graze in the valleys and on the mountains, consisting of horses, cattle, sheep, goats, and hogs. Fish abound to a great extent, such as halibut, salmon, turbot, skate, pilchard, large oysters, thornback, mackerel, barbel, bonitos, soles, lobsters, sardines, cod, tunnies, anchovies and pearl-oysters. As I have already observed, pearl fishery is much pursued at La Paz, though formerly more extensively than at present. Gold, silver, and copper, are reported to abound in this territory, though to what extent, it is difficult for Americans to ascertain, especially their locations and richness; however, in the region of La Paz, a gold mine is worked and said to be rich.

Scattered over the vast area of Lower California, there are thirty towns of comparative small population; twelve islands in the Gulf of California, and about eight west of the coast, but near it; six bays on the east coast, and ten on the west; and finally, in this view of its natural characteristics, few are the rivers or streams which furrow the proud mountains of this peninsula, foaming and tumbling to the shores.

Sonora embraces an area of one hundred and twenty-three thousand, four hundred and sixty-six square miles, with a population of near one hundred and fifty thousand; its capital being Ures, and possessed of a population amounting

to about six thousand. The southern portion of it, as well as the central, seems to be quite well watered, and the soil highly productive under the influence of irrigation. La Cordillera on the east, south, and on el rio de Yaqui, towers at many points to a magnificence rather sublime; and some parts of it are characterized as abounding in gold and other valuable metals. There are several good ports on its coast, in the Gulf; and in this respect, Guaymas possesses a preëminence. The productions would to a great extent, assimilate themselves to those of Lower Callfornia. Several rivers abound; such as the Mayo, Yaqui, Guaymas, or San José Creek, Sonora, San Miguel, and San Ignacio; and in the northern and northwestern portion of this State, the rivers Gila and Colorado flow.

As I have observed respecting the powerful Indian tribes of this State, some of them retain their primitive manners and customs, rejecting the overtures of the Cross, and preferring to worship God as did their Fathers of yore! These Indians have never been conquered, and it would seem from various statements, that the Mexicans hold possession of portions of the country as tenants at will and sufferance. Some of the Indians pursue agriculture, while others roam over the forests, plains and mountains, choosing a nomadic life to the rural retirement of fixed gains. Within the boundary of this vast extant of country, there are one hundred and twenty towns and cities; the chief of which, in a commercial view, stands Guaymas.

The port of Guaymas possesses one of the safest and best harbors on the Mexican Pacific coast, or in the Gulf of California. It is rather capacious and sufficiently large to accommodate one hundred sail. It is secure against all kinds of wind, and at all seasons; the holding ground is *good,* being clay; and it is surrounded by high mountains, *which* cause it to be remarkably hot and unhealthy during

the rainy season. The season at this port is the same as at Mazatlan and San Blas.

North of el rio Yaqui, the country is rough and mountainous as it approaches the river, but between this river and el Mayo, it is highly productive, as I have heretofore remarked, assuming a more varied and beautiful aspect. The grains of the temperate zone can be produced in the northern and middle portion of this State, most abundantly; while sugar-cane and cotton, with many of the tropical fruits, are made to abound in the more southern portion. The route from Franklin near El Paso to Guaymas, through the States of Chihuahua and Sonora, though meandering, in order to pass the bases of towering mountains, and lead a track through their deep defiles, will, at no distant day, receive the approbation of untold millions, and add a new link between the Eastern and Western Coasts of America.

This route is reputed practicable for a railroad, and it is only a matter of time, ere a wilderness and the savage hordes shall be awakened by the nostrils of the Locomotive and the Cars of Freedom, plowing their now desolate wilds!

The population of Guaymas in the dry and healthy season, is near five thousand; but approaching the rainy portion of the year, many leave, going to other towns in the more elevated sections of the State, while others go to *los ranchos y las haciendas de ellos*, to superintend the active and pressing concernments of their rural interests, and thereby avoid the sickness or heat of summer.

The route adapted for a railroad from Franklin or El Paso to the port of Guaymas on the Gulf of California, would indicate itself by the way of the Guadalupe Pass, the head waters of the Yaqui river, and so between this *river and that of* Sonora, through practicable districts for

this object, till it may reach the San José Creek or the Gunymas river, thence down it to this noted port, more especally, of late consideration.

There are but two lakes, Cienago de Ceres and Pitic Chiquito; the former thirty miles long, and the latter twenty. With respect to the purposes of Government, the State is divided into the two departments, Arispe and Horcasitas. On the western coast in the Gulf of California, there are several bays and ports which might be turned to advantageous uses, were the State prosperous and rapidly advancing.

Ures, the capital of the State of Sonora, alternately with Arispe, was originally a point designated by the holy Jesuits in the early settlement of this territory, for themselves to exercise their faith in, and propagate among the Indian tribes inhabiting this region of country, the symbols of their creed. The town is laid out much with a view to regularity, consisting of squares, with *una Plaza* in the center. The church adjacent, is a substantial, well-built edifice, commanding in its aspect, and resembling the order of architecture usually adopted for this class of buildings in Mexico. Private residences are constructed in the same manner as in other places having fallen under my pen, being well built and spacious. No peculiarity distinguishes the Legislative Hall from other buildings, except that a flag-staff is seen floating in the gentle breeze. Cornices and other exterior ornaments, are rather tastefully appended to many of the buildings, which, in view of these being plastered and colored, or painted as usual in many of the Mexican towns, tend to promote an agreeable and pleasant appearance.

Near this town is el Rio de Sonora, and on either side the bottom land for more than a mile extends, possessing remarkable fertility, and producing corn, wheat, Chili, pumpkins,

and also adapted to sugar cane and cotton. For in the town there grows a single date tree, which perhaps the holy Fathers brought with them to this early Mission ground.

The river bottom lands extending to the city of Hermosillo, distance of about fifty-four miles from Ures, possesses a prolific soil; and would, under a good cultivation, supply many a new-rising mart, with the substantials and even the luxuries of life. Most of this space is lined with *ranchos y haciendas;* and some few produce large supplies of wheat and other grains. La Hacienda de Don Manuel Gandera at Tapahui, is reported to grow more than twenty thousand bushels of the former grain, besides all others usually cultivated in the State of California.

Hermosillo is a city of much importance and wealth in the State of Sonora, situated nearly thirty-seven leagues in a northward direction from the port of Guaymas, with a good wagon road for the convenience of travel, and the transmission of merchandise into the interior. It was formerly called the Presidio of Pitic, which belonged to the company of Horcasitas. Its site is in a valley about ten miles in length by four in width, which is flanked by la Sierra de la Campaña, and las Sierras de Colorado and Chanati; and through which el Rio de Sonora flows, supplying it and the city people with an abundance of water for irrigation and household uses. This city is reported to possess a population of more than twenty thousand souls, including nearly all shades of human physiognomy. The climate is considered healthy; though the thermometer in summer ranges for months during the day time from ninety-four to one hundred degrees Fahrenheit, yet as the westerly breeze springs up in the evening from the Gulf of California, resembling somewhat the summer winds of San Francisco, but in a much milder form, it brings with it the

cool ocean air, and makes the nights refreshing and invigorating.

The rivers Sonora and San Miguel, aftar uniting a short distance above Hermosillo, and thence flowing half way to the Gulf, lose themselves in a swamp, or *en una cienega.* The Spanish or Moorish style of architecture is observed here as elsewhere; however, many of the private buildings combine durability and tasteful designs in their construction, especially in the principal streets, being all colored and often ornamented with colonades, pilasters and balustrades. The court-yards are filled with orange trees and flowering shrubs, and made glad with jetting fountains, dispensing their liquid dews upon the tender and perennial verdure. La Alameda attached to the margin of this town, is designed tastefully, and possessing quite a variety of ornamental trees, among which may be mentioned the palm; the elapse of time may yet note it highly embellished, combining the tropical and temperate verdure in perennial bloom, when the destiny of this fair land shall be swayed by a stronger hand and a firmer will.

The productions of the valley of Hermosillo, however small the extent of its surface, often exceed more than sixty thousand bushels of wheat; twenty-five thousand bushels of maize, besides a large amount of other grains. Vegetables abound and are cultivated to some extent; chili colorado, garlics, sweet potatoes, and onions, demanding the most attention. Among the class of fruits most cultivated in this valley and district of country, and abounding most plentifully, figs, pomegranates, peaches, citrons, lemons, limes, oranges, melons and grapes, rank most preeminently with those of similar fruit-bearing regions in other countries, possessing in a remarkable degree a rich saccharine taste, almost unequalled, owing to the heat of the climate and the peculiarity of the soil.

I am informed that in this region of Sonora, the vine is extensively cultivated, and from the grapes a large amount of brandy and wine is annually manufactured for home consumption; and comparing this, as well as the lower part of this State, with the south of Spain and Italy, and the Islands of the Mediterranean likewise, I can conceive no just reasons why this portion of Sonora, when the same variety of fruits, and especially grapes, shall be imported and introduced as coming growths among its fruit and vine-growers, should not produce equally as good, if not excel, the Smyrna figs and the Malaga raisins. It is stated by good authority in Sonora, that the product of wheat in the middle and northern portion of the State, is frequently from two hundred and fifty to three hundred to one; rather excelling the palmy days of California. Much of the northern commerce of this State, is carried on through Hermosillo, making Guaymas in this respect a mere entrepot, and consequently it has many wholesale establishments for vending dry goods. Some manufacturing is pursued—such as the making of shoes, boots, hats, saddles, serapes, and rebozos.

Cinaloa extends over an area of near thirty-six thousand square miles, having a population of one hundred and sixty thousand; its capital is Culiacan, with a population of eight thousand. The surface of the land along the coast is low, and somewhat sandy; though the soil is quick and remarkably fertile. Its productions being similar to those of Lower California, yet more abundant and of a more tropical growth, which might be made to compare with those of the territory of Colima. Dye woods abound on the coast, and towards La Sierra Madre; and on the eastern frontier there abound extensive forests of pine and cedar. Along the coast there are six bays, the chief one of which is that of Mazatlan. Several rivers flow into the coast, as Cañas,

Rosario, Rastla, Xabala, Culiacan, Cinaloa, Esterellos and Fuerte. Flowing from the mountains in the more eastern portion of the State, they subserve the admirable and valuable purpose of irrigation during the dry season. In this State, there are one hundred towns and cities, and out of the latter, Mazatlan, Culiacan, Cinaloa and villa del Fuerte are the most prominent.

Jalisco embraces an area of forty-eight thousand five hundred and ninety square miles, with a population of seven hundred and seventy-four thousand, four hundred and sixty-one; its capital is Guadalajara, having a population of more than sixty thousand. This is represented as one of the best of the Mexican States, possessing remarkable fertility in the soil, extensive forests of pine and cedar on the mountains; and on the coast, luxuriant forests of valuable dye woods, commingled with vines. Gold abounds in the mountainous regions of this State. It yields, in the greatest exuberance, most of the productions of the torrid and temperate zones; and the uplands are reputed to be highly promotive of health.

The ports on the coasts are Manzanillo, La Navidad, Tamatlan and San Blas. The most noted of these, is that of San Blas. The rivers flowing into the coast, which now present themselves to my notice, are Tamaula, Ipala, Rio Grande de Santiago de Tololotlan, San Pedro and Rio de Las Canas. The most important of these, is the rio grande de Santiago, which rising partly at Lake Chapala, and carrying the superfluent water of this lake along in a tumultuous manner for many a mile, through frowning wilds and huge precipices, disembogues its turbid waters into the bay of San Blas.

In the State of Jalisco there are near five hundred towns, villages and cities, and among the latter the cities of Guadalajara, Tepic, Sayula, Zapotlan and Tequila, are the most

noted, as having fallen under my observation. These I have sufficiently mentioned in previous letters.

Lake Chapala is the only one of importance in this State, and it embraces an area of one thousand seven hundred and sixty square miles, being situated in the southeast portion; it is eighty miles long by twenty-two wide on an average. The soil near the margin of this lake, is reputed to abound in fertility, and much attention is about being paid to the planting of cotton, aside from the other tropical productions commonly grown in its vicinity. The ponds about the port of Manzanillo, and their peculiar formation around the harbor, impress one with a continuous circuit of water; and lake Cuyutlan, I have quite fully noticed. At the head of this lake where persons frequently take boats to save land travel, is the small Mexican village Tecoman, and near it and about thirty miles from the port is the small town of Istlahuaca, in the vicinity of which los Salinas abound, already alluded to.

The territory of Colima extends over an area of three thousand square miles, with a population of sixty-one thousand; its capital or chief town is Colima, having a population of more than thirty thousand. Its fertility and productiveness I have enlarged upon in such a manner as to make its agricultural and productive properties known and appreciated. The port of Colima receives but little attention—most of the merchandise coming through that of Manzanillo. The volcano of Colima I have written upon sufficiently for the comprehension of its important bearings. There are but thirty or forty villages or towns, besides the city of Colima, in the territory, and there are but two rivers called Colima and Almeria. The forest resources of this territory have already been mentioned.

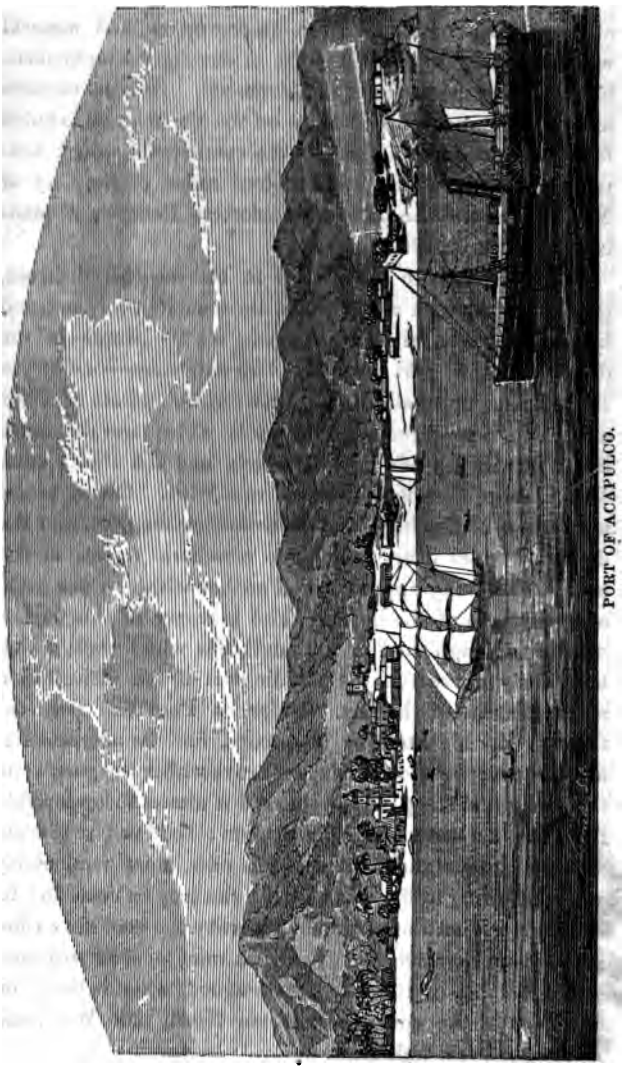
Michoacan possesses an area of twenty-three thousand square miles, with a population of more than four hundred

and ninety-one thousand; its capital is Morelia, a city of some importance situated near the interior, and not far from lake Patzcuaro, in the midst of a fertile and bountiful country, having a population of eighteen thousand. The soil of this State is unsurpassed in the rapid promotion to maturity of all those productions adapted to the tropics, including in its high altitudes those of the temperate zones. It possesses an uneven surface; the mountains of Anahuac spreading out in various shapes, and in the westerly portion is the noted volcano of Jorulla. El Rio de Balsas and its tributaries, are the most important in this State; the former forming the boundary line between this and the State of Guerrero. The forests on the coast and mountains abound in valuable woods, while the latter, for years past, have distinguished themselves by the quantities of silver, gold and lead they have thrown into circulation. In the western portion is an extinct volcano by the name of Cerro de Tancitaro. In the various portions of this State there are near three hundred towns, villages and cities, among the latter of which, Morelia, Patzcuaro and Zamora are the most prominent. The city of Morelia is noted as a city of considerable wealth—for the magnificence of its cathedral and numerous churches, and for the salubrity of its climate. There are two other small lakes towards the northern portion of the State, but of no avail to navigation. It has no harbors, and its commerce on the Pacific is carried on through the port of Siquantanejo, in the State of Guerrero.

The State of Guerrero extends over an area of thirty-two thousand square miles, having a scattered population of two hundred and seventy thousand; its capital is Tixtla, with a population of near six thousand. It possesses a varied and mountainous surface in rapid successions; a quick and generous soil to promote, in a high degree, tropical and temperate growths; forests adapted to the wants

of home consumption and foreign commerce, and mineral wealth waiting for more thought to develop its inexhaustible resources, with scenery unsurpassed. Its coast extends more than three hundred miles on the Pacific, and is noted for one of the finest harbors in the commercial world, Acapulco, which is within two hundred miles of the City of Mexico; besides the ports of Maldonado, Petatlan, Siquantanejo, and Zacatula.

It is to Acapulco that nature in her smothered throes, gave a harbor with all the requisite capacities finished, and bid commerce a land-locked home on the waters of the deep! To this port there are two entrances—one by La Boca Chica, or small mouth, between the points of Pilar and Grifo, near three hundred yards wide; and the other lies between La Isla de la Roqueta and La Punta de la Bruxa, more than four hundred rods wide. Owing to the abruptness of the high lands surrounding the port, and the depth of water near the shore, merchant vessels of the largest class may approach and anchor within a few rods, or even yards of the beach. The entrance of this harbor may be distinguished by a remarkable white rock, which lies nearly abreast of the middle part of the white beach at the bottom of the bay. Before a Pass had been cut through the highlands or mountains, for the admission of air, the concentration of the sun's rays within the port, upon the water and steep sides, rendered it almost insupportable from the increased heat by reflection; however, at present an ocean breeze sucks through this pass, more particularly at night, owing to the earth within the tropics retaining its heat longer than the ocean, and thereby the cool air rushes in to fill up the vacuum. The rock may be seen with ease at the distance of three or four leagues, when it bears on any part of the compass between North half West, and North northeast half East.



PORT OF ACAPULCO.

The chief rivers are Nasca, Papagallo, and the Balsas with its tributaries. During the dry season, these serve the husbandman the means to procure the rapid growth of his planted labor. There are but two small lakes in this State, and these are known by the names of Oculla and Chattango, near the coast and below the port of Acapulco. Scattered over this extent of productive surface, there are two hundred villages, towns and cities; however, none of them possess much note, aside from the ports of Acapulco and Maldonado. The ruins of Cochicalco are observed in the northern portion of the State, and go to indicate the architectural genius of ages passed into oblivion.

The area of Oajaca is confined to thirty-one thousand, eight hundred and twenty-five square miles, with a population of near four hundred and ninety thousand; the capital of this State is Oajaca, having a population of twenty-five thousand. The surface of this State is uneven and mountainous, possessing all that variety in climate which will promote health, comfort, and all the necessaries for man. Bearing in mind the productions of the territory of Colima, and the increased heat and the temperature of the numerous mountains, one may arrive at some conclusion as to the capabilities of the soil, while its primitive and secondary formations abound in precious metals. The productions combine cacao, plantains, bananas, pine-apples, cocoa, sugar, honey, some coffee, maize, wheat, manioc, grapes and cochineal, with some others, though not so important. The mountains and the lowlands abound in valuable forests. Its coast is two hundred and seventy miles long, and aside from Tehuantepec, which is now included in a newly organized territory, it possesses several ports, as Tilapa, Mistepec and Tututepec. The chief rivers are the Colotepec, Manialtepec and Rio Verde, with its affluents. In this State as in the others I have mentioned geographically, la Sierra

Madre towers in various and conspicuous heights in many portions. The ancient fort of Los Cues, on the trail to the City of Mexico from Tututepec, is another mark, distinguishing the characteristics of the past inhabitants of Anahuac. And near Mitla, not far from el rio de Mitla, an affluent of el rio de Verde, there are also extensive ruins which tend to characterize the antiquity and past magnificence of this country.

In this State there are one hundred and eighty towns, villages and cities, though none marked with more note than Oajaca. It is well built, after the Mexican style of architecture, spreading over an area of two and a half miles. The outskirts of the city and the neighboring country teem with gardens and plantations of cacao, cochineal and sugar; while in the city are manufactured soap, perfumery, and chocolate, as well as many other articles of home consumption. Some of its buildings are reputed by Mexicans to be noted for the grandeur and magnificence in the designs of their borrowed architectural arrangements; the Ionic, Doric and modern Gothic orders prevailing; as in the City Hall or Court of Audience, the Colleges, Convents, Cathedral and the Bishop's Palace. This city is situated on el rio Verde, near one hundred miles from its mouth.

The State of Chiapa contains an area of near nineteen thousand square miles, and a population of one hundred and sixty-five thousand; its capital is Ciudad Real, having a population of seven thousand. The extent of its seacoast does not exceed one hundred miles, with two entire lagoons, resembling lakes. Its surface is truly mountainous on the west, south and east, being in the form of half a circle, and mostly traversed by la Sierra Madre. Its chief rivers are Coatzacoalco, Tabasco, Pasiton and Usumasinta, which flow into the Gulf of Mexico. The soil is rich and

highly productive in the valleys, producing in perfection both the growths of the tropics and temperate zones, as well as abounding in rich forests and mineral wealth, scarcely developed. For a specification of its productions, I refer to the vicinity of Colima and of Oajaca. The number of its towns, villages and cities does not exceed one hundred and fifty; while among the latter, Ciudad-Real, Chiapa and Palenque rank as the most known.

The remains of ancient places demonstrating the existence of a people far advanced beyond the present race of Indians, show their mouldering fragments in the north-east portion of the State, in and around Palenque—touches of ancient architecture—monuments of past ages! The volcano of Soconusco is in the southern portion of this region under review.

The State of Chihuahua extends over an area of more than one hundred thousand square miles, with a sparse population of near one hundred and fifty thousand; its capital being Chihuahua, having now but fourteen thousand. Its western and eastern portions are mountainous, with a few indentations where settlements are progressing; while the more central part seems better adapted to the wants of a grazing and agricultural people. In the mountain ranges of the Mexican Cordillera, precious and useful metals abound; such as gold, silver, copper, lead, iron, tin, saltpetre, bituminous coal and cinnabar. It is not noted for forest trees as possessing any extraordinary value. The soil is rich, especially on the water-courses, between the ranges, and in the mountain valleys, where grazing forms the chief pursuit; though the vine, wheat, peas, barley, beans, maize, some cotton and sugar are produced. This is a great grazing State, abounding in stock of all kinds, which constitute the capital thrift of the people, and which are disposed of in the same manner as the State of Ken-

tucky takes to sell her surplus. Its climate is warmer but equally as salubrious as that of the State of California; in point of game, and capabilities to produce a wealthy people, Chihuahua resembles that golden State. The Indian tribes in this State and the Apaches north of the line, commit frequent devastations upon the settlements, carrying off stock, women and children. El rio Conchas, and its tributaries are the most important streams watering the State, besides Rio Grande del Norte, on the east. There are but four lakes, and these possess a small area; as Guzman, Maria, Candelaria and Patos.

Extending over this extensive region of country, the eye can see, and the ear can hear of only two hundred villages, towns and cities. The city of Chihuahua is the most distinguished; though the sun of its glory—the tide of its march seems to be set; yet its magnificent remains and the grandeur of its architecture attest capital designs in the days of its by-gone prosperity. This city is well laid out, or with streets crossing each other at right angles, which are broad, mostly paved, and quite clean. The square called la plaza Mayor, is quite extensive, and ornamented on one side with a Cathedral, costing when built, eight hundred thousand dollars, being constructed of hewn stones; it is surmounted with a dome and two towers, having a facade, with statues of the twelve Apostles. Its style of architecture is in imitation of the modern Gothic order.

On the other sides of la plaza there are public and private buildings, including the ancient State-House; and in the center of this square there plays a beautiful fountain, which is supplied with water by a well-constructed aqueduct three and a half miles long, flowing from a tributary of the Conchos, and supported on several stupendous *arcades*. Much trade between this city and San Antonio, in Texas, and St. Louis, in Missouri, is carried on, and that *too*, I am told, most profitably.

Towards the north-western portion of the State of Chihuahua, and on the west bank of las Casas Grandes river, which flows into lake Guzman, lie decomposing and mouldering under the luxuriance of vegetable growth, the ruins of Aztec greatness. From the appearance of *las casas grandes*, the great houses, it would seem that their outer portions were the lowest, and not above one story high, while the central ones were from three to six stories high. The ruins are constructed of adobes; though these are much larger than those in use among the Mexicans at the present day. From a report touching a close examination of las casas grandes, it is to be inferred that they occupied a space of at least eight hundred feet from north to south, and from east to west, near two hundred and fifty. On the south side a regular and continuous wall may be traced, while the eastern and western fronts are extremely irregular, leaving projecting walls. Within the enclosure there appears to have been several court-yards of greater or less dimensions. Las casas grandes here resemble those near the Pimo villages on the Gila, which I have already alluded to.

The State of Durango covers an area of forty-eight thousand five hundred square miles, having a population of near one hundred and thirty-eight thousand; its capital is Durango, with a population of twenty-five thousand. Its surface is uneven in the middle and south-western portions; though it generally has a rough and broken surface. La Sierra Madre here, as in the other states I have described on the Western Slope of the Mexican Cordillera, raises its towering peaks as rods to catch electric clouds, in order to spread their crystal dews, and fertilize the thirsty earth. There are but three rivers demarked in the State, which are the Conchas and Nasas in the north, and in the south-east, el *Rio grande* de Parras. There are no lakes

wholly in the State, but lakes Parras and Cayman are *situated* in the north-east portion, and are small. Spread over its extent, I have noticed not more than one hundred towns, villages and cities; of the latter, Durango stands the most distinguished.

The scenery in its vicinity is unique, grand, and imposing, carrying in its contour a picturesqueness which hightens man's astonishment at the works of nature. Iron mines, and also gold and silver, abound in this State, as well as most of the metals discovered in the State of Chihuahua; the former of these are considerably worked near the city of Durango. It has a mint, several churches, a hospital, a college, several convents, and also woolen and cotton manufactories, with a good and lively trade in her manufactured articles.

The agricultural and grazing productions of this State resemble that of Chihuahua, which constitutes the wealth of the eastern portion, while other parts of the State comprise the mineral resources. During my sojourn in Guadalajara, news from different sections of the confederacy frequently came in, and that from the city of Durango was truly distressing. The Camanches especially, and other Indian tribes, have, for years, committed almost unheard of depredations, devastating much of the country north and west of the city, *los ranchos* and *las haciendas*, driving off their stock, appropriating their annual stores, and finally forcing the population of flourishing districts to retreat to the city of Durango, for more ample security, while this contains a population of at least 25,000, a sufficient number, with American will and courage, to repel the combined attacks of all the northern hordes of Indian warriors.

The State of Zacatecas embraces an area of more than 30,000 square miles, with a population of 306,000; its capital is Zacatecas, having a population of 26,000. This State

forms the central ridge of the Republic, and prior to the discovery of gold in California, it stood nearly first in point of mineral wealth in America. This wealth is confined much to silver veins pervading the mountain districts; though its mineral productions assimilate themselves much to the other States just under review.

The most fertile portion of the State, in an agricultural sense, extends over the region of Las Aguas Calientes. The productions combine those of the temperate zones, and likewise the torrid, though the latter do not generally arrive at that state of perfection here, as in the States on the Pacific Ocean; and this is on account of the varied altitude of its level and mountain lands.

There is but one lake in the State, which is in the northern part, and called Lago de Carbonate de Soda; and but the sources of four rivers, el rio Grande de Santiago, el rio de Santander, rio Grande de Parras, and el rio de Bolanos.

The number of towns villages, and cities does not much exceed three hundred, while the chief are Zacetecas, Sombrerete, and Fresuillo. The picturesque scenery of the capital, being built over a vein of silver, tends to excite the admiration of volcanic throes, leaving an imposing impression upon the mind. It possesses many buildings of a public character, sueh as churches, the government hall, the hall of audience, a mint, a gunpowder mill, and several institutions of learning, and also private residences of costly construction. The style of architecture resembles that of the other Mexican cities and towns, having already fallen under my pen.

The eastern and northern portions of the State are mostly adapted to grazing pursuits, consisting of similar stock to Chihuahua, while the mountain forests teem with pine and cedar.

The State of Guanajuato extends over an area of near

13,000 square miles, with a population of 719,000; its capital is Guanajuato, having a population of about 50,000. This State is mountainous, though not so much so as some others in review; yet the Anahuac Cordillera rears up many towering peaks, approaching 10,000 feet on the north and southwest. But one river has its source, laving the soil of this State, which is el Rio de Laxa. There is no lake; however, on the mountains forests abound, though not so valuable as in the lowlands near either coast. In the valleys the productions are essentially tropical, and resemble those of the tropical States I have described, to a great extent; yet the mountain sides are adapted to grazing, and the culture of those productions peculiar to a northern latitude.

The mineral wealth consists of gold, silver, tin, iron, lead, marble, crystals, salts, ochre, sulphurs, antimony, and cobalt. The precious metals and various spices compose the most essential exports of this State, yet on a small scale for past years; and still this is one of the best settled regions of the Republic, possessing, aside from its mineral resources, a soil and climate that would arouse the quietude of age, and stimulate the youthful step, to the field of prosperity and intelligence. El Rio Grande de Lerma flows through the southern portion, emptying its waters into lake Chapala, on the east.

In this State there are but four hundred towns, villages, and cities; of the latter the capital is the most important, though being in a mountain defile, its surface is more than six thousand feet above the level of the sea; and like ancient Rome, it is built upon many hills; though mineral wealth prevails; the streets being, for the most part, steep and winding, so much so that one can form no adequate conception of their direction, unless upon some of the points overlooking the city. Many of the edifices of this city are

truly elegant and imposing; such as the churches, chapels, convents, monasteries, institutions of learning, the city hall, the Capital House, a mint, and manufactories, as well as the private residences. Hewn stones are mostly used in the construction of buildings of any importance, either for public or private use.

The gold and silver mines in this vicinity are reported to be the richest as yet discovered in Mexico. Several articles of merchandise are manufactured in this city; such as leather, tobacco, linen and woolen cloth, soap, powder, saddles, bridles, trappings for horses, pottery, and various articles adapted to excite the pleasurable admiration of the ignorant or inconsiderate. It was much more prosperous, and exceeded its present population, when under the iron sway of Spain.

This State embraces the central ridge and portion of the Republic between latitudes 20 degrees and 30 minutes, and 21 degrees and 40 minutes north.

Adios,

Señor,

AGRICOLA.

CINCINNATUS.

LETTER LI.

Comparing the Mineral aspects of Western Mexico to the State of California—Mexicans lack Perseverance—Rivers Flowing into the Pacific—Forest Trees—Grape Vines and Mulberry Trees—Cochineal Insects—Value of Mexican Manufactures per Year—Her Imports and Exports, the amount of the latter and former—Value of Country Estates—Value of City Estates- Amount of Taxation on these Estates—Imposts on Foreign Merchandise—Debt of Mexico—Revenues, how formed—Expenses of the Government per Year—Whole Income—Distressed Condition of the Country People in the region of Durango—Other Computations of the Debt of Mexico—Tehuantepec, the Route of—New Orleans Company constructing a Plank Road across the Isthmus of—Its Advantages over all other Routes, connecting the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, saving One-Third of the Time in Travel, and the Distance of Seventeen Hundred Miles—This, a Capital Investment—Tends to induce Immigration into California—Past Experience as to other Routes for Years elapsed since Steamboat Navigation began on the Pacific—Travel to the Pacific Coast—Tehuantepec Territory—Composed of—Its Area—La Ventosa—Its Heat—Its Plain near—Rivers of the Southern Division—The Surface—The Lagoons—The Soil—Its Towns—The Distance across—Practicable as the San Blas and Vera Cruz Stage Road—Its Grade—Different Points—Capital to open the Road—Rivers to be Bridged—Towns in the Middle Division—Its Climate—Air and Water pure—Rainy Season—Boca del Monte—Paso Malo—Rivers Navigable—Northern Division of the Isthmus—Its chief River, with its affluants—River Bottoms—Towns of this Division—Soil—Productions—Export of Acayucam—Healthy Climate—Forests—Gold—Energy required—Metals—Climate throughout the Isthmus—Spaniards—Creoles—Indians—Zoology of Tehuantepec—Sketch of its Vegetable Kingdom—Similar Productions throughout the Tropics of America—Americans called Filibusters—Americans in Mexico—Burial Places—View of the Relations between the Republics of North America—That of the Enterprise of the United States of America—Review of Anahuac—Policy of Spain in the New Government—Spanish Motives—Form of the New Government—Fate of past Nations uniting Church and State—Destiny of such at present—Propriety of Religion—Good in its Peculiar, Social, and Moralizing Sphere—Object of these Letters—Contracted Notions—Progress of Mexico since the Conquest—Indian Bands—Human Sacrifices—Importers of Light and Knowledge—Consequences thereof.

AMIGO MIO:—Having traveled from the southern portion of the Oregon mines, in the territory of Oregon, lati-

tude forty-three degrees north, and throughout that region to the coast, and so pursuing my course in various directions, and observing the formation of valleys and mountains, their primitive and secondary constituencies, their constitutional aspects and configurations, as far south as latitude thirty-four, and also confining my attention to the western portions of the Sierra Nevada mountains, this long stretch of known mineral wealth, I feel to assure you, amigo, as well as assured in stating, that, observing and comparing the various mountain ridges of the grand chain of the Mexican Cordilleria, or Sierra Madre—another name for Sierra Nevada; the valleys among them, their sloping sides, and their meandering rapid rivers, on the western portion of this Republic; those ridges pervading each State under review, in many different forms, produced by volcanic fires, and bearing the same constitutional aspects and configurations, with reference to the primitive and secondary formation of rocks and deposits; and also the same constituencies of soil and mineral analogies, to my observation and knowledge of mineral districts in the State of California; this portion of Mexico, respecting its mineral kingdom, has scarcely been moved by the hand of man in the effort to develop its endless latent resources; notwithstanding hundreds of mines have been explored and successfully worked.

The Mexicans lack weight of character, will, and well defined courage and perseverance to pursue and accomplish. The Mexican ports on the Pacific, for the same extent of country, and concentrating the same amount of productive lands in mineral, grazing, forest, and agricultural capabilities, cannot be excelled by any other country, the better known of which I have mentioned in my review. The rivers flowing into the Pacific from this western slope, seldom impress one with much nobility or importance, except to water the country; for they are usually rapid,

tumbling and foaming over ledges of primitive and secondary formations, presenting insurmountable obstacles to the facilities of Mexican navigation; though such would be slightly winked at by American enterprise.

As I have already remarked in allusion to forest productions, Brazil wood, also Campeche, giant ferns, and capsicum abound within the tropical portion of Mexico, on the low and high lands; also, cedars, ebony, and rosewood; while in other parts marbles, jaspers of the richest and most variegated colors, rock crystals, and many of the more precious stones, as opal, topaz, torquoise, agate, amethyst, and cornelian, abound to a considerable extent.

During the period of Spanish sway in Mexico, and after the introduction of the grape and mulberry culture had proved itself successful and highly remunerative to those pioneers engaged in it, a decree of los Cortes de España was issued, prohibiting the further extension of this culture, and finally enforcing those who had entered into it with their capital, industry, and experience in these pursuits, to cut down and destroy the vines and trees planted, fearing the rival influence which this new province or viceroyalty might create, to the disadvantage and prejudice of the home population.

Since the Mexican revolution, little attention or spirit has been manifested with respect to the re-introduction of the grape and mulberry culture; though millions of acres are adapted to these pursuits. Monopoly was the order endorsed by Spain, with reference to the commercial and agricultural concernments of her distant provinces, and she has almost lost them all; and Mexico, in this respect, not unfrequently treads in her *wake*, and what will she not eventually loose? for this year, 1856, even an order, from the Mexican *supreme* Congress, was issued, to all parts of the Republic, to enforce, in cities and towns, the devastation of shade trees, under a severe penalty.

Cochineals are still reared in the more southern portions of the Republic; though their production has not attained, since the revolution, the prosperous condition and amplitude which it bore prior to that period. They are grown upon a species of cactus, and when matured for gathering, the branches and leaves are shaken, so that the insects fall upon a mat spread out for this purpose. The culture of these insects for the object of dying, was well understood by the Aztects.

From the best information obtainable while I was in the city of Guadalajara, touching upon the value of Mexican manufactures per year, I was led to conclude that it approximated near the sum of one hundred millions of dollars, embracing the whole; as cotton, woolen, silk, paper, olive-oil, rum, wine, pottery, glass, gold and silver lace, forming the chief articles manufactured; however, there are many others not mentioned, of comparative value. The imports of Mexico come mostly from England, France, and Germany, yet some from the United States; including most all merchandise in use, for the comfort and pleasure of man. The exports consist mostly of gold and silver coin, dye-woods, capsicum, nuts of the cacao, palm nuts, sarsaparilla, cochineal, copper, salt, and pearl. The annual exports of gold and silver approximate the sum of twenty-two millions of dollars, stated by some authorities; while the other productions amount to about four millions of dollars in the form of annual exports, making in all twenty-six millions. These form an offset to the imports, hence presenting commercial exchanges to the amount of fifty-two millions of dollars per year.

A report made by by the *Tax Officer* of the government estimates the number of country estates at twenty thousand, and their general value not far from one billion of dollars; while that of the city estates at seven hundred millions of

dollars, making in all one billion, seven hundred millions of dollars. Upon this estimated value of real estate in the Republic of Mexico, the whole amount of direct taxation, seldom exceeds the sum of five hundred thousand dollars per year; therefore, the revenues for the support of the government, besides the amount above, are derived from imposts on foreign merchandise, which amount to more than one-third of the value of the inventories certified to by Mexican Consuls, residing in foreign ports. These considerations represent and re-affirm the statements which I have already made, with reference to the exemption of real estates and the *privileged class* from taxation.

Some political accountants represent the whole debt of Mexico to exceed the sum of one hundred and thirty-three millions of dollars, about one-third of the whole value of the real estate both in the country and cities.

The revenues of the States of the Mexican Federation are composed of direct and indirect imposts; the former are imposed upon persons, estates, and professions, but scarcely preceptible; while the latter are on articles of consumption; the movement of agricultural products, for sale, into the different markets; national and foreign industry; inheritances, transfers of real estate, and the working of the mines in the mineral States.

It has been communicated to me while in this Republic, that the expenses of the Mexican Government per year, amount nearly to the sum of fifteen millions of dollars, while its entire revenue is computed to not exceed ten millions of dollars per year. By other political accountants, the Republic is computed to owe a foreign debt of some more than fifty millions of dollars, and a home debt of near that amount; while there are yet under diplomatic consideration and adjustment, at least ten millions of dollars, which sum is likely to be enforced against her for reparation.

Having omitted to observe the distressed condition of the expelled proprietors of ranchos and haciendas, with their families, who had been once so rich and flowing in abundance, in the region of Durango, I will now observe, that many of them are living in this city in comparative penury, having scarcely any wants but those to supply hunger and garments; for they are frequently compelled to sell their costly diamonds and jewels at a mere nominal valuation, in order to procure for themselves the necessaries of life.

Contemplating the various routes between the Pacific and Atlantic oceans, completed and proposed, to connect the more expeditiously the extreme portions of the United States, aside from the practicability of having a middle and southern line of rail-road; the advantages which these routes should afford to the traveling community and to the dry-goods commerce; and also, a spread of a more important American influence, none, o an unbiased and uninterested people, more than for the best link of inter-communication, seems to be of so deep a concernment and consideration under present review, as the Tehuantepec route, in the form of ocean navigation. The region of Tehauntepec, but a short time since, at farthest two years, has been formed into an organized territory of the Mexican Confederation, occupying the Isthmus of its own name, with a population of near ninety thousand. Across this Isthmus, the distance is computed to he one hundred and forty-three and one-half miles in a straight line, connecting the Pacific ocean and the Gulf of Mexico. This distance is almost traversed by el Rio de Coatzacoalco; which rises near el rio de Chicapa, emptying into the Gulf of Tehuantepec.

The New Orleans Company, formed a few years since, for the Gulf of Mexico and Pacific ocean navigation, and having procured a charter for the right of way from the

Mexican Government, have now nearly completed a plank road to connect Minatitlan on the Coatzacoalco, twenty miles from its entrance into the Gulf of Mexico, with La Ventosa on the Gulf of Tehuantepec, near latitude sixteen degrees, twelve minutes and forty-nine seconds north. The advantages of this route over the others in operation, clearly demonstrate the important bearings which this link, so superabundant with golden fruit and capabilities, will afford to inter-oceanic navigation, from the fact of its lessening the distance between New Orleans and San Francisco, at least one thousand, seven hundred miles, as seen on the map; and consequently, a saving of one-third of the time now required; and upon the same basis of computation, one third of the present expense of the traveling community at large.

Viewing this route as I have been led to, while visiting the Mexican Republic, I feel astonished that the capitalists of the United States do not penetrate more into its magnitude and importance than it has experienced from their sagacity and foresight, since its inception; as almost every investment judiciously made, and carefully guarded in this country, seems to pay well; though this route would seem to embody them all in the magnificence of its designs, and the paramount productiveness of its adoption, when completed.

There are other weighty considerations to be taken into account, in view of this route, besides a saving of the time and expense herein mentioned. The most urgent and paramount of these, which now impress my pen, are coupled with the endeavor to induce a more steadfast immigration and settlement into California, as well as a more permanent state of commercial and agricultural affairs, which should make old dales and hills, valleys and mountains, re-echo with a healthful action and reaction of business, and with the notes and songs of gay festivity; and also, reverberate

from ocean to ocean, the arts and sciences in the transit of the shortest space of time practicable. Less speculation, but more industry, the State of California needs, in order to promote the best ends of her Commonwealth, which can be attained only by opening a cheap communication to the Atlantic States, that might rapidly facilitate the desire to emigrate West and settle the Pacific shores.

Experience in the steam navigation of the ocean, from the eastern to the western domain of the United States, since the acquisition of California, has proved the *routes* binding the two extremes together too expensive by far, for a numerous class of European and American citizens, having families to support, to patronize; therefore in this respect, many of those sources, inexhaustible in their nature, as abounding in wealth, which are now dormant in this State from the want of population and the facilities to induce it, would have been far more advanced; such as the *vine* and *mulberry culture;* and a more complete system of agriculture and manufactures, in order to have effected ere this, a more sovereign independence.

The pressure of travel from the Atlantic to the Pacific coast of the United States of America, coupled with the desire to dig gold in the State of California, and the expense attending this long journey, has recently revived, and drifted capitalists and the public mind towards a most probable certainty as to the completion of the Tehuantepec route. Before I close this letter respecting my geographical recapitulation of Western Mexico, I propose a more minute description of the newly organized Territory of Tehauntepec.

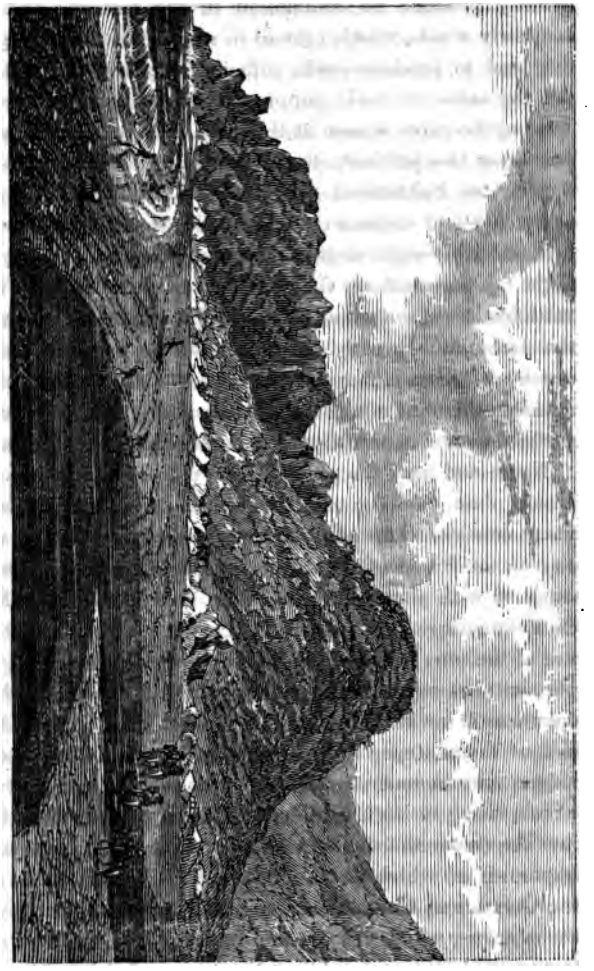
It is my intention first to notice the Pacific portion of this Territory, which extends twenty-five miles inland, including the harbor and bay of La Ventosa; next the middle portion of the Territory extending near seventy

miles northward, which comprises the table and mountainous districts; and lastly, the portion bordering on the Gulf of Mexico, which extends fifty miles inland towards the Pacific.

The Territory of Tehuantepec embraces a portion of the States of Oajaca, Vera Cruz, and Tobasco, with meridian lines running north and south, and those parallel east and west, which geographical position causes the coast to run east and west on either side—quite different from the other portions of the American Continent. Its area is near sixteen thousand square miles, averaging over one hundred and forty-four miles in length, and some over one hundred in width.

The harbor of La Ventosa is located on the southern coast of this Territory, and lies in latitude north sixteen degrees, twelve minutes and forty-nine seconds; and the western portion of which owes its formation to el Cerro del Morro, a lone rock having an altitude of one hundred and fifty feet, which is broad at its base and cone-shaped. This serves as quite an efficient protection against northers. The anchorage within this port is considered highly tenable, which, for the most part indicates on examination, a clay bottom. The depth of the water varies from eighteen feet near the shore to forty; so that vessels of the largest size may approach within a few hundred feet and ride in safety, either influenced by the south or north winds.

By some slight improvement to this port in the form of a breakwater, as suggested by some, steamers and sailing vessels would be enabled to receive their passengers and cargoes directly from the shore. From the experience of able mariners, it is the conclusion that La Ventosa is equally as safe for shipping at all seasons of the year, as Monterey in the State of California. The northers are reported to blow directly off from the land, and conse-



LA VENTOSA.

quently produce no commotion in the waters; and the southerly winds, which prevail in summer and autumn, do not tend to produce swells sufficient to alarm sea captains for the safety of their shipping while swinging at anchor. During the rainy season at this port, and in fact the Pacific portion of this territory, the heat seldom exceeds eighty-two degrees of Fahrenheit near mid-day, and at night it falls to seventy-four degrees; while the dry season increases the heat to eighty-eight degrees after mid-day, and during the night the thermometer falls to seventy-seven degrees. This modification of the tropical heat at La Ventosa, and across the Isthmus, is greatly owing to its being encompassed by ocean waters on either side, which serve as strong barriers against otherwise a miasmatic atmosphere, and to promote a vigorous and healthful growth, both animal and vegetable.

North and near the port of La Ventosa, a beautiful and broad plain, running east and west, presents itself, with many considerations advantageous to the growth of a new city on the Pacific. This is not subject to overflow, but is supplied with pure mountain water, flowing from los Rios de Tehuantepec and San Juan. Owing to the peculiar figure of the port of La Ventosa, vessels may enter and depart without any regard to the direction of the wind, which enhances it much in a commercial view. The Pacific Division of Tehuantepec resembles an inclined plane, with some ridges and mounds; and it is watered by eight rivers, which, rising in las Cordilleras, in the rear of the port, flow into the ocean and the lagoons near the coast, and the most important of which are the Tehuantepec on the west, and the Ostuta and Chicapa on the east. Near the sources of these rivers, which flow on the southern portion, the water is pure and clear, resembling the waters issuing from las Sierras Nevadas, in the State of California. Some of these rivers will, at no distant day, present their importance as

sources of water power to a more thoughtful and a far more provident people. The rivers not having far to run, rather impress one with the idea, during the rainy season, of mountain torrents dashing and tumbling to the coast. The length of the lagoons receiving the most of the waters from the southern part of the Isthmus, is near forty miles, averaging five in width; and these lagoons are connected with the ocean by a channel called Boca Barra.

Of the surrounding country one can have an extended view by ascending to the hight of Cerro Morro, and casting his eye over the plain stretching to and skirting las Cordilleras on the north. This plain is somewhat rolling, and generally possesses a rich and quick soil, composed of vegetable decomposition, clay and sand, with a diluvium from the mountains; and it also abounds with trees of various kinds, as those in the territory of Colima; but their growth is not so luxuriant near the mountains as the coast.

It is now my purpose to mention in a casual manner the towns embraced on the Tehuantepec plain. Huislotepec is situated east of the Tehuantepec river, four miles from the sea, and near a mound called the "Hill of Crystals." Its population is small, not much exceeding two hundred natives. The buildings are sparse, scarcely entitling it to the consideration of a town. La Villa of Tehuantepec is a place of importance, being situated twelve miles from La Ventosa, and having a population of near fourteen thousand. The same characteristics prevail here as in other portions of the Mexican Republic, with reference to classes and shades of colors among its population. The Castilians and their descendants, unmixed, assume a proud and forbidding air, while the mixed are more affable and complacent, and the Indians are servile and humble. It seems from the number of churches, only sixteen, that there is in this city a large amount of religious faith. Among the

crumbling remains of perhaps the Toltec race, there is yet seen in this place the venerable Parraquia, built by Cocijopi, in 1530, who was then the ruling chief of the Zapotecos tribe of Indians. The architrcture of this ancient edifice attests the progress of a people whose onward march has been eclipsed by the march of quite a different civilization; and it would appear to remind one of Stephen's narratives respecting Central America. The market place is the public square, or la plaza publica, where provisions, vegetables, and fruits are sold by the same class as attend market in other Mexican towns having fallen under my observation.

The productions I shall mention more particularly after having described the topography of the chief towns or places of note, and the geographical position of the mountains and rivers on this Isthmus.

The city of Tehuantepec is somewhat noted for manufacturing various articles of consumption; such as earthenware, soap, saddles, with their trappings, silver ware, hats, mats, leather, cotton cloth, silk sashes, boots, shoes and home clothing, to a great extent. The government of this territory is now confined to the general government of the Mexican Republic, which appoints a Governor, with subordinate officers, and with a restricted delegating power. This city under review enjoys the privilege of a City Council, several Alcaldes, and such others as a wholesome municipal police would seem to require. Some attention is paid to education in the form of public schools, and to the pleasures of ornamental grounds, similar to Colima; and also to places of amusement. Hotels, stores, and shops of various trades abound, and would, from the number of her citizens, denote a discordant din, yet conducive to one end, that of a livelihood. Mount Guiéngola, fifteen miles northwest of the city, is celebrated for having been once the

abode of man, from the ruins abounding near it, and for a cave nearly on its summit.

Juchitan is another villa of importance, and has an industrious population of six thousand, who manufacture the same articles as at Tehuantepec, and among whom there are some foreigners. It is situated in a fertile district of country, and near fifteen miles northeast of the city of Tehuantepec. The only building of note is La Parraquia, built by the Dominican Friars in the year 1600.

Itztaltepec is a village of near fifteen hundred inhabitants, who seem industrious and enjoy fine houses. Indigo is much grown in this district, one would suppose, from the vats abounding throughout the district. It is situated six miles from Juchitan, in rather a north-east direction.

The other villages and places important to be noticed are San Geronimo, Chihuitan, Santa Cruz, with a population in each not exceeding six hundred, though they are situated in fertile districts of the southern slope. Santa Cruz embraces una hacienda, where the sugar crop in the year 1850 amounted to one hundred and fifty thousand pounds, quite sufficient to supply the State of Oajaca. The machinery resembles that which I have described in other parts of these letters. Before describing more of the towns in this territory, it is my purpose to mark the line of the great thoroughfare proposed to connect the Pacific coast with the Gulf of Mexico, and with this in view I will begin at the port of La Ventosa.

From this place to Suchil, by the way of Tehuantepec, Comitancillo, San Geronimo, Rancho de la Martar, el Paso de la Chivela, el Barrio, via Xochiapa plains, Cerro Sarabia, Paso de la Puerta, and Picaduras, the distance is estimated to be one hundred and eighteen miles. From Suchil to Minatitlan, on the west side of el Rio de Coatzacoalco, by the way of the mouth of the Jaltepec, Mount Encanta-

da and Tesistepec, the distance is computed to be ninety-five and a half miles by measurement, including the windings of the survey, which distance, added to the former, makes the length of this route, from ocean to gulf, of two hundred and thirteen and a quarter miles, though the direct air line is only one hundred and forty-three and one half miles. A more direct line would be on the east side of that river, but not so practicable for immediate use, without considerable expenditures. In view of this distance, and judging a stage road through this territory as practicable as from San Blas to Vera Cruz, by the city of Mexico, I can see no good reason why it cannot be traveled in thirty-six hours, from the fact of all the requirements being so ample and near at hand. A carriage or stage road from the Pacific plains, through the pass of La Chivela, is considered practicable, and that, too, without a heavy outlay of capital. It is reported that the grade approaching the summit, on either side of this dividing ridge, can be effected by excavating sixty feet to a mile, or one foot to every eighty-eight feet. The distance from La Ventosa to Tehuantepec is twelve miles; to Comitancillo, twenty-four miles; San Geronimo, thirty-one miles; Rancho de la Martar, thirty-nine miles; La Chivela Pass, forty-six and nine-tenth miles; El Barrio, via Xochiapa Plains, fifty-nine and one tenth miles; Cerro Sarabia, ninty-six and two fifth miles; Paso de la Puerta, one hundred and six and three fifths miles; the intersection of the Picaduras, one hundred and twelve miles; and to Suchil, near el Rio de Sarabia, one hundred and eighteen miles; so that the remaining distance to Minatitlan by the way of the Jaltepec, Mount Encantada, and Tesistepec, including the necessary circuits, will not exeeed the aforesaid two hundred and thirteen and a quarter miles. With an expenditure of, at most, two hundred thousand dollars, a good, practicable stage road can be made, as na-

ture has done much to direct the line, while considerable labor has been brought to bear on el Paso de Chivela by Señor Garay. The rivers such as the Tehuantepec, Los Perros, Malatengo, Sarabia, Jumuapa, Jaltepec and Monzapa, would require some expense in the construction of permanent bridges; the materials for which may be had near their several localities.

The towns occupying the middle division of the territory of Tehuantepec, are small, and scarcely deserve the appellation of anything more than haciendas. However, I will mention their names: La Chivela, El Barrio, San Domingo and Petapa on the west; and Santiago, Tarrifa, San Miguel, Chimalapa in the valley of el Rio de Chicapa, and Santa Maria Chimalapa, on the east side of the thoroughfare under review, comprise the whole which now impress my pen as worthy of notice; notwithstanding they are situated in valleys and on the mountain sides, which should teem with an industrious and prosperous people.

The point called Suchil is not far from the river Sarabia, which unites with el Rio Coatzacoalco, near fifty-five miles in a direct line from Minatitlan. In a northward direction from the plains of Xochiapa, which are also north of the pass of Chivela, on the Pacific, the Indian pueblo of San Juan Guichicovi is situated near six miles in a mountainous district, which commands a view of dales and and hills far around. The town is much scattered and possesses a population of more than five thousand, who cultivate the fertile vallies and prairies in maize, sugar-cane, rice, bananas, plantains, and such other productions as I shall mention in my cursory review of this lovely and admirable country.

From the position and altitude of the Pacific and middle Divisions of Tehuantepec territory, one is forced to the conclusion that in point of climate, they are unsurpassed almost

by any other region, especially within the tropics; for the temperature seldom varies more than twenty degrees. The towns of Petapa, El Barrio and Santo Domingo, being situated not far from the table land north of el Paso de Chivela, enjoy a high reputation for promoting health, and are resorted to by invalids from other portions of the Mexican States and the territory itself. The water here is pure; the air bracing, and the fruits abundant. The rainy season in each of these Divisions is in the months of June, July, August, September and a portion of October, though not in that profusion and deluge-like manner, as in the northern Division of this territory. For many months in the year, the summits of the Sierra Madre are capt with clouds which impart rains, and invigorate the bottom lands at its base, running out into fertile and luxuriant valleys. Towards the eastern part of the middle Division is the noted hacienda of San Gabriel de la Boca del Monte, situated north of el Rio de Coatzacoalco. It was settled in 1824, and has now a mixed population of near one hundred, engaged in the cultivation of sugar, coffee, vanilla, maize, fruits and tobacco, and also in the growth of stock generally.

Malo Paso, or Paso del Sarabia is at the head of native navigation on the Coatzacoalco river, where el Rio Sarabia unites its waters with the former river. It is now merely known by name, as it has, like many a Mexican enterprise, fallen into the forest shades for want of a thoughtful and a more industrious people. In a direct line from Minatitlan Paso Malo is near sixty miles.

From Minatitlan to the rapids near Suchil, on el Rio de Coatzacoalco, the distance approximates fifty-five miles in a direct line, and by the windings of the river it must be one hundred. It is reported that this distance may be navigated at all seasons of the year by light draught steamers, drawing somewhat less than two feet of water. At

least this distance can be navigated with as much facility as the Ohio river in low water—the river which floats millions of dollars worth of products to different markets. The time required by those steamers to make the one hundred miles should not exceed twelve hours, running time. This distance thus navigable would be a great saving of land travel and staging, especially during the rainy seasons on the northern division of the Tehuantepec territory, where the road from the nature of the country, might be much obstructed, as it is not unfrequent, at that period, for this region to be almost deluged from the intense tropical rains. The distance from Suchil, by a stage road, to La Ventosa, being only one hundred and eighteen miles, and mostly over more elevated tracts of country, where the air is cooled by the mountain winds, flowing into the valleys to fill up the vacuum produced by concentracted heat, could be traveled, at most any season of the year, within twenty-four hours, surmounting the natural obstacles presented by el Paso de Chivela.

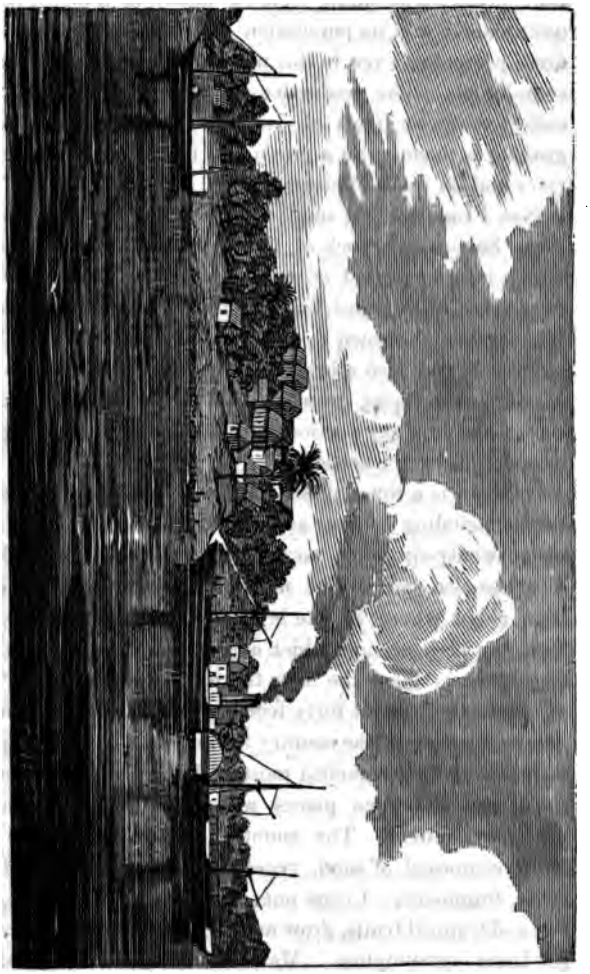
The northern division or portion of Tehuantepec embraces by far the most fertile and productive extent, in the form of bottom lands bordering the rivers. El rio de Coatzacoalco rises in the mountainous districts of las Cordilleras, which divide the territory into the northern and southern plains; and its prominent affluents on the east are los rios Uspanapa and Coachapa, which receive their fountains from the same mountain ranges; while on the west that river is greatly augmented by the disembougement of los rios Tierra Nueva, Tacateño, Tacojalpa, Brazo-Mistan, Naranjo, Jaltepec, Jumuapa, and Sarabia, all of which are fed by mountain clouds. Near twenty miles east of the mouth of the river Coatzacoalco el rio Tonala flows into the Gulf of Mexico, formed by two tributaries called los rios Sanapa and Tancochapa, ten miles in a direct line

from its mouth. These rivers rise also in the elevated table lands of the dividing ridges of las Cordilleras.

The country adjacent to all these rivers most generally possesses such an unsurpassed fecundity and quickness in the soil, and such a luxuriant vegetation in plants and herbs, which everywhere bound the vision and incite the mind to admiration and thankfulness, that, when on some high peak, looking down upon the exuberance of such a landscape, one feels that nature has there embodied all her kindred eliments, and was happily spreading them out for the repast of man.

The kinds of plants and trees, and also the different kinds of productions will, in their turn, engross my pen. On the northern slope of Tehuantepec, there are a few towns, whose topography with reference to the Territory, it is now my purpose to briefly mention. Minatitlan, from being the sea-port and the extent of ocean steamers ascending the river Coatzacoalco, will be the first to claim my attention.

The site of this port is on the west side of that river, about twenty miles from its mouth. The town is small, not numbering over six hundred souls, whose colors and characteristics will assimilate with other villages which I have already mentioned. Its site is low and somewhat subject to overflow in the rainy season; though it ascends in the rear of the river, and is considerably rolling. Some few avocations for a livelihood are pursued here and in its vicinity. Merchants or traders, mechanics, boatmen, and the tillers of the soil exist; and tropical productions and fruits abound, while grazing to some extent is pursued not far distant on the rich meadow lands bordering the river and the small rivulets. The channel of the river Coatzacoalco, from its entrance into the Gulf to Minatitlan, averages rather more than twelve feet in depth; though in *places* the lead seems to indicate forty.



PORT OF MINATITLAN.

Almagres, situated on the east bank of the Coatzacoalco, near thirty-eight miles from its mouth in a direct line, is quite small; and its population does not exceed four hundred, possessing even in this number almost every shade of complexion, The productions of tropical fruits, sugar and coffee, comprise most of its agricultural staples, while grazing is made quite a pursuit on the bottom lands of the river and its small affluents.

San Francisco is a small village on the south side of the river Sanapa, a branch of the Tonala. In population, its size is inferior to that of many Haciendas, not numbering over three, or the most, four hundred. The country in this vicinity, and between this river and that of Tancochapa west of it, and also a branch or arm of the Tonala, is rich in soil and in forest growths, and also in tropical productions; and in many portions of this region, grazing is much attended to by the settlers.

Jaltipan is a town of two thousand five hundred inhabitants, including Indians and mixed classes, and is situated near twenty-six miles north-west of the mouth of el Rio Coatzacoalco and twelve miles nearly west of Minatitlan. The ridge where its site is located is somewhat elevated from the plain around, which adds a cheer to a home within its confines. Near the town there is a hill called the "Hill of Malinche," about forty feet high which affords one an admirable view of the country far around. All those pious requisites which embelish most of Mexican towns, one can see here; and even places where the Saints teach the youth to imitate. The country is productive; the soil being composed of sand, vegetable decomposition and volcanic fragments. Cocoa nuts, cacao nuts, sugar cane, coffee, and tropical fruits, grow and are considerably cultivated for home consumption. Maize is throughout this country a staple as much as corn in the valley of the Mississippi, and serves the natives as the main staff of life; though

thousands of other esculent productions everywhere abound.

The city or villa de Acayucan, is thirty-six miles in a north-west direction from the mouth of the Coatzacoalco, and twenty-four miles nearly west of Minatitlan. Its population approximates six thousand, and is mixed as it is usual for Mexican cities. It has churches, school houses, and to some extent, abounds in trade, having several stores, a cotton gin, and sugar presses where the country people haul their cane, in order to manufacture it into sugar. The same productions here abound as I have alluded to above. The pursuit of grazing is somewhat attended to. The forest trees are considered valuable, and under a directing *hand*, would be turned to account. In the heat of mid-day the creeping vines dangling from lofty growths, invite the wearied man to the repose of shade, surrounded by thousands of gay festoons, formed with blossoms unique and fragrant. Some trade is pursued with Minatitlan from this place; though most of its traffic is carried on through el Paso de San Juan, on a river of that name, which serves an outlet for most of the exports of the northern portion of Tehuantepec territory. In the prosperous days of this city, the annual exports of ixle, a species of the Agave Americana, though much finer, and of cotton, through that Pass to Vera Cruz, are reported to have exceeded one million of dollars. Salt abounds in this region and is an article of trade. Here all that man may want, can be acquired; the soil is rich; the water-powers are good and abundant, while the forests abound in game; and nature's works and the fragments of past ages afford instances of attraction and study.

Moloacan is a small Indian settlement, with a population not exceeding eight hundred, who are graced with one church and a school house. Its site is much elevated, so as to command a view of the rich valleys and *potréros* which skirt the northern base of las Cordilleras that divide the

waters of two oceans, and is situated seven miles from Paso Nuevo on the east side of el Rio Coatzacoalco, and about eight miles from the Gulf. The productions are maze, ixle, and fruits peculiar to the country. The ixle or bromelia Pita, a species of the Mexican Maguey, abounds here in great luxuriance, and could easily be made an article of extensive exportation. Within eleven miles of this place, a petroleum spring abounds, the sources of which are considered inexhaustible. Not far distant from this, one can trace the demarkations of a sulphur spring and a mine of rock salt.

The small Indian village of Cosuliacaque about seven miles from Minatitlan, in a westward direction, dates its settlement back more than one hundred and forty years, and is noted for its healthy location. Many persons here attain the advanced age of one hundred years, which is seldom exceeded in more northern climes. This of itself, with few exceptions in low marshy bottoms, is sufficient proof that the territory of Tehuantepec, including its plains and mountainous districts, is as healthy, if not more so, than any other portion of the American continent, and would, under a fostering government, eclipse or equal any other region in the multiplicity of its productions, and the extent to which its commerce might be carried on in the exportations of its indigenous growths.

La Hacienda de San José del Carmine possesses a settlement of one hundred natives, on the north bank of el Rio Tancochapa, a branch of the Tonala. This river, as well as the Uspanapa, borders the estate, and both of them are navigable, which affords the San José Hacienda every advantage with reference to transporting its products to home or foreign markets.

In this region, gold has been discovered; and it is evident that the precious metals must have been sought and

mines worked in this part as well as many other districts in Mexico, by a people quite civilized, and anterior to the conquest, from the fact that artificial wells exist, which resemble earthern jars five or six feet deep by three feet in diameter; and which are near el rio de Tancochapa. By some writers who have explored the Gila and the river alluded to, it is inferred that those wells must have been formerly used for washing out the precious metals.

The soil here is well adapted to the culture of cotton, rice, sugar, cocoa, cacao, maize, and esculent fruits; while the forests abound in valuable timber, dye-woods, and gum-trees. The natural meadows are rich in the luxuriance of their grasses, and cattle spot their surfaces and mountain sides wherever the eye is turned towards verdant landscapes.

The geological as well as the constitutional formation of the mountains of the Isthmus, strongly resembles that of California; and in fact, all the Cordillera chain throughout North and South America, under different names, bears nearly the same aspect, and evident proofs of the precious metals abounding. That gold abounds in the mountains of the Isthmus is a matter of record handed down by those who explored this territory immediately after the conquest of Anahuac. Alvarado's exploration of Tehauntepec, in 1522, is proof of the position which I have already assumed; and the history of that exploration informs us that the natives of the country appeared to have an abundance of the precious metal.

It is now for a new race, a race possessed of iron will, to turn the fertile plains, the rich meadow lands, the forests, the mountains, the rivers and the ports, to account; by dotting them with smiling habitations, by spotting them with a new and improved breed of stock, by the echo of the axe in their dense recesses, by exporting their gold and

retaining a part of it as a circulating medium, and by the snorting leviathans and the whitened and wide spread canvas, plying within their provinces.

Iron, petroleum, obsidian, pitchstone, volcanic glass, and murate of soda abound in different localities on the Isthmus. The extent of the different kinds of metals and minerals in this region of the Mexican Republic, no discovery has defined, nor can it, where will and mind are trammeled by the influence of superstition, and by the supererogation of benighted ages.

The climate throughout the whole of the territory of Tehauntepec, is healthful and invigorating, except in proximity to the low and overflowed lands near the lagoons and some of the rivers. By one day's travel, elevated districts can be reached, where the air is cool and bracing, where the tropical fruits and productions grow abundantly; and where invalids resort, and the infirmities of age are wisely cared for by the profusion of nature's cup. The thermometer seldom falls below seventy degrees, and is not often known to rise higher than ninety-eight degrees, Fahrenheit. It is highest in the month of May, just before the rainy season sets in, is quite low through that season; and in the months of December and January, it is usually the lowest. The population of this territory is mixed, as in other portions of the Mexican Confederacy. That of the natives greatly predominates; however, there are a few of other classes, especially Europeans and Creoles, who seem to exercise the civil functions.

The same ill feeling exists here between the European Spaniards and the Creoles, as I have already alluded to, which perhaps is owing to the assumption of natural rights on the part of the former. In character, appearance, and morals; in color, their facial contour, and the phrenological formation of their heads; in their habits and manners, the

Indians of the Isthmus scarcely differ from those who live in other portions of the Republic; but they seem to have greatly departed from the moral code of the Aztecs in point of sobriety.

The Zapotecos tribe, inhabiting the Pacific plains, appear to be more advanced than the tribes of other portions of the territory. Even before the Conquest, they were independent of the iron rod of Montezuma, and excited the jealousy of that monarch, from their knowledge of the mechanical arts and their well fortified towns. From the record of history, as handed down by Bernal Diaz, these Indians appeared to have been far advanced in civilization, to have cultivated the soil and manufactured their products; such as cotton, ixle, and cacao, and even to have understood working many of the metals.

The Zoology of the Tehauntepec territory resembles that of other portions of tropical Mexico, which I have already alluded to in another number of these letters; however, there are some animals here whose peculiarities I desire to notice.

The Vampyre bat dwells in the region of la Boca del Monte, where in the night he stealthily bleeds both man and beasts, with such extreme care as not to arouse them to self protection; and when they awaken from repose, they scarcely know what has produced the effect; but they feel a languor bordering on inertness. This kind of bat is found in Central America, and also within the tropical portion of South America.

La Boca is near sixty-five miles north of La Ventosa, on the road to Minatitlan. A few of the Alpaca or Peruvian sheep inhabit the mountainous districts of San Juan Guichicovi, west of the road to Minatitlan. Fish are said to abound in the rivers and all the smaller streams, on both sides of the dividing Cordillera ridge of the Tehaunte-

pec territory, and are considered of an excellent quality; though they inhabit the mountains and low-land streams of the tropics.

Among the wild animals adapted for game, the deer, the coatimondi, hares, rabbits, squirrels, and peccary may be mentioned as the most important. The Monkey tribe abound here with all its varieties as in other portions of tropical Mexico. The preacher monkey has undoubtedly obtained his name from imitating the ranting orators of holy and pious thought, when the early missions were established among the *natives*. The wild turkey and curassow abound in most parts of Tehauntepec, and are remarkably tame from their being little hunted. The crested curassow resembles the turkey, and may be ranked among the domestic fowls of portions of Mexico. I saw many of them domesticated at San Blas, some at Tepic, and also at Colima; and between the latter place and the port of Manzanillo, I saw wild ones. The dove, pigeon, quail, partridge, tinamon and chachalaca are abundant, and no small delicacies at the festal board. The latter of those fowls somewhat resembles the hen; though it possesses in its flesh a greater degree of delicacy and nourishment. The same birds of prey and plumage inhabit the wilds of the mountains, and the plains of Tehauntepec, that I have heretofore described.

On the Pacific coast near the lagoons there are numerous species of Land Tortoise; and one of the kind is much appreciated for its shell, which is used by the natives to manufacture combs, and which I have seen imported into the portions of Mexico I had the satisfaction of exploring.

The honey-bee is found in the territory of Tehauntepec on high elevations, in the same manner as in the region of Tonila, Sayula, Zapotlan, and in the higher altitudes of the

Republic. The Cochineal insects were formerly much attended; but of late, owing to the chemical dyes of the French, their use has greatly fallen off.

The same productions abound in various parts of Tehauntepec as in the territory of Colima; such as cotton, sugar-cane, the palm family, cacao, mamey colorado, chirrimoya, cactus, banana, plantain, pine-apple, rice, orange, lime, lemon, citron, fig, plum, the Peruvian bark tree, sarsaparilla, mahogany, Campeche wood, vanilla, the pepper tree, tamarind, the banian tree, Jatropha manihot, sweet potato, melons, tomato, jalap vine; and many others which I did not allude to in my description of the forest and fruit bearing trees with respect to that territory, and the States of Guerrero and Oajaca.

It is now my intention to consider more fully, much of the balance of the natural productions which I have, up to the present, omitted. Notwithstanding, there are peculiarities about some of those which I have mentioned, and which, occasioaally I may bring under review. In different portions of the Territory, sugar-cane attains twenty-eight joints in height, with a diameter from two to three inches, which is similar to that grown at the mouth of the Amazon river, in South America.

In some portions of this country, sugar-cane is seen growing wild, and of a remarkable saccharine quality. Cacao is considerably cultivated, especially in the northern division of the Isthmus. The climate and soil are well disposed to produce cotton of a fine quality; but there is here as elsewhere in this Republic, a little attention paid to its culture. The *army worm* which so often ruins the prospects of the southern planter, is entirely unknown to reign in this region. Brazil-wood and Palo-amarillo abound throughout the Isthmus, and are important for their red and yellow dyes. Tobacco is much cultivated, and grows most luxu-

riantly. There is one kind called "carral," which is not so large as that *del monte;* but in point of quality and flavor, it enjoys as high a reputation as the best of Cuba tobacco. Everywhere in the forest, climbing vines prevail which add a coolness to the traveler's toil and invite him to the shade of repose, while some of the varieties—"bejucos de agua," produce a sweet, cool water to refresh him under the influence of the meridian sun.

Much of the country north of the dividing ridge, or the northern division of the territory, abounds in allspice, botanically called Myrtus Pimenta. This tree is deserving of some more notice than casually calling it by name and giving it a place. It often rises to the height of more than twenty feet, and when in blossom, presents an aspect of rare beauty with its oval leaves, four inches long, and of a deep green and shining color, and with numerous branches of white flowers, each having four petals. Casting the eye over the vegetable creation, one can certainly witness no object so beautiful and enchanting as a pimento tree in the month of July.

The usual method of forming a new pimento plantation is to appropriate a piece of woody ground in a part of the country where the scattered trees are found in a native state. The other trees being cut away; in a year or two, young pimento plants are found to spring up in all parts, which are supposed to have been produced from berries dropped by birds. In September the berries are fit to be gathered, and one industrious man can gather seventy pounds per day. Then they are spread on a terrace in the sun, where they should be kept free from the influence of moisture, and when dry, their appearance is that of a reddish-brown. Allspice is so called from enjoying the reputation of resembling in flavor a mixture of cinnamon, nutmegs and cloves. An odoriferous oil is distilled from

its leaves. What a field is here presented for enterprise and the stern march of man to an abode in a paradise as of yore!

Near el rio de Coatzacoalco, coffee trees are seen growing abundantly, and apparently in a wild state, and with few exceptions, no care is taken to prune and properly cultivate the trees; notwithstanding this neglect, the berries are reputed to be of a superior quality in point of flavor.

Caoutchouc is a substance obtained from the milky juice of several plants, which are natives of the torrid zone. The chief ones are the Hevea, Guianensis and Jatropha elastica. This juice is also obtained from several trees of different genera, and in this manner: Being procured by incisions, it is applied in successive layers over a mould of clay, and dried by exposure to the sun, and to the smoke from burning fuel. When perfectly dry, the mould is broken, leaving the caoutchouc in the form of a hollow ball. In its solid state, caoutchouc is of a close texture, distinctly fibrous, of a light brown color, or sometimes, nearly white. It was not until the year 1736 that this extraordinary natural production was made known in Europe. It is during the wet season that the incisions are generally made, in order to obviate their drying up.

The India-rubber tree abounds extensively in the northern division of the territory, and also in portions of the southern division; though more especially in the region of Uspanapa river, and most of the other rivers in the north. It is computed that each tree properly attended, will yield a pound of gum per year, which is usually worth forty cents. This is another among the numerous staples which I have and am to enumerate, as being destined sources of profit to an industrious people.

La Yucca or the Jatropha manihot flourishes in most

every part of the Territory. Cassava is made from this plant or shrub. This grows near eight feet high, having broad, shining and sometimes, hand-shaped leaves, with beautiful white and rose-colored flowers. The roots are the only edible parts of the shrub or plant, which I have horetofore described.

Cassia or wild cinnamon abounds on the Pacific coast in the southern division of the Territory. Its bark was well known to the ancients and is no less esteemed by the moderns; though since the use of cinnamon has grown so important, the former is little required, except for the preparation of what is called the *oil* of *cinnamon*. The buds as well as the bark are used in cooking.

Gum Arabic is the product of the *Acacia arabica* and some other species of the same order, abounding in all parts of Tehauntepec. It exudes spontaneously, in a fluid state, and remains attached to the branches after it has concreted and become solid. This exudation takes place continually during the whole of the dry season, from October to June; but more copiously it flows immediately after the rains. Gum Arabic is obtained in rounded masses, capable of being easily reduced to a powder, insipid to the taste, or possessing a slight acidity, which, however is only perceptible to those who use it habitually. It is an important article in commerce, and from its reputed abundance in the territory, the day must come when its bulk and weight shall contribute to the sail, which dot and whiten the Ocean. Its native name on the Isthmus is Mesquite.

The bromelia pita, or ixle of the Territory, already slightly alluded to, differs somewhat from the *agave Americana* of Europe, and the maguey of other portions of Mexico; inasmuch, as the fibres of the former are reputed be much finer, even as fine as the finest flax.

The Indigo plant or shrub, the Añil cimarron, or de

Guatimala grows abundantly throughout the southern division of the Isthmus, in the same manner as it grows on several of the Hawaiian Islands. Saffron, and by the natives and the language of the country, called Azafron, flourishes also in portions of the Isthmus. Its value as a dye is well known. Its seeds are purgative, and are sometimes used in dropsical cases. Its technical name is carthamus tinctoria.

The various species of Bombax and Ceiba are prodigious American forest trees, with huge buttresses projecting from their colossal trunks. The Bombax pentrandrum, a native of India, inhabits the southern division of the Isthmus. This yields a gum which is given in conjunction with spices in certain stages of bowel complaints; and it is said to be purgative and diuretic. The leaves of a species of the bombax called Baobab constitute, when dried and reduced to powder, Lalo, a favorite article with the Africans, which they mix daily with their food, for the purpose of diminishing the excessive perspiration to which they are subject in the torrid climes of Africa. The fruit is the most useful part of the tree. Its pulp is slightly acid, agreeable, and frequently eaten; while the juice expressed from it and mixed with sugar, constitutes a drink which is much valued as a specific in putrid and pestilential fevers. The dried pulp is mixed with water, and in some countries, administered in cases of dysentery. It is chiefly composed of gum, like gum Senegal, a sugary matter, starch, and acid which appears to be the malic.

A shrub called by the natives of the Isthmus Achote, is technically known by the name of Bixa Orellana, and inhabits a portions of the territory. Its leaves are alternate, simple, on short stalks, without stipules; usually entire and leathery, and very often marked with transparent dots. The peduncles of this shrub are axillary and many flow-

ered. Its seeds are angular, and covered with an orange red waxen pulp, or pellicle. The latter substance is the Arnotto of the shops; it is separated from the seeds by washing. It is chiefly used in the preparation of chocolate, but was reckoned an antidote to the poison of the manioc or jatropha manihot. Farmers use it to stain their cheeses, and dyers for a reddish color. Martius says that the seeds are cordial, astringent, and febrifugal.

The Palm family, or most of it abounds throughout this country under review, especially in its low altitudes. The kinds called Sagus laevis and genuina are the most noted for yielding the finest sago; however, there is another kind quite noted in this respect, which is that of Saguerus Saccharifer. This kind yields large quantities of juice, which, by fermentation produces an intoxicating beverage, and when boiled a sugar used for various purposes. When the tree is exhausted by the incessant draining of its fluids, Sago of good quality is obtained from its trunk, as much as one hundred and fifty to two hundred pounds weight from a single tree. The value of Sago is known to the commercial world.

Of the Jatropha Manihot I have already written, giving some particulars of its utility. Here I wish to mention another kind called Jatropha Purgans, as prevailing on the Isthmus in low altitudes, on either side of la Sierra Madre. It is noted for the fierce acridity of its seeds, and from them an expressed oil is obtained, which is considered a valuable application in cases of the itch and the herpes; it is also used, when a little diluted, in cases of chronic rheumatism. The varnish used by the Chinese for covering boxes is made by boiling this oil with the oxide of iron. The leaves of this plant are considered as rubefacient and discutient; and its milky juice is supposed to have a detergent and healing quality, and is sometimes used to dye linen black.

Of some of the species of Anona which abounds in Tehuantepec, the fruit is agreeable and succulent, possessing a sugary mucilage, which predominates over the slight aromatic flavor that it possesses. Of this kind are the delicious custard apples and the cherimoyer of Peru, which nature has likened to the former name mentioned in this paragraph. Its pulp is yellowish, and when eating it one feels a devout gratitude for the wise provision and order of nature.

Within the territory of Tehuantepec abound several of the species of the Laurel family of trees, whose spices are more or less aromatic and fragrant, while some are valuable for their timbers; others have fruit which partake of the quality of the nutmeg; some are useful febrifuges; a number of them yield a fixed as well as a volitile oil, and an abundance of camphor. The kind called Laurus Nobilis is quite noted for its aromatic leaves, which are considerably used by confectioners; however, there is another termed Tetranthera, whose fruit yields a greasy exudation, which bears the reputation of fixed oil, and is supposed to constitute the principal part of the fruit Persea Gratissima, so much valued in tropical Mexico and the West Indies. The kind here alluded to inhabits chiefly the northern division of the Isthmus.

The Rattan Palms abound in all portions of the territory, though more especially in the low altitudes. By the inhabitants they are called Cañas de Indias; they are described as residents of the dense forests bordering the rivers and rivulets, where the rays of the sun can hardly penetrate, in which situations they form spiny bushes which obstruct all passage into those jungles, rising to the tops of the highest trees, and falling again, so as to resemble a prodigious length of cable, adorned, however, with the most beautiful leaves, pinnated, or terminating in graceful tendrils.

Throughout most of the Pacific, or southern division, Indian Figs, of the cactaceæ family of plants, grow plentifully, as in other portions of Mexico. The flowers are either showey or minute, and usually last only one day or night. The leaves are almost always wanting, and when present they are fleshy, smooth, entire, or spine shaped. - Its fruit is oblong, nearly two inches long and an inch in diameter, and resembles the properties of the currant. Some kinds are refreshing and agreeable to the taste, while others are mucilaginous and insipid. Many are regarded as palliatives in cases of intermittent and bilious fevers, in consequence of their sub-acid juice.

The Mango tree flourishes generally in every portion of the Isthmus, having a resinous, gummy, caustic, or milky juice. The fruit of this species of the order of Anacards is as highly valued in tropical countries as the peach in the temperate; the bark of its root is a bitter aromatic, and is employed in cases of diarrhœa, and others of a kindred character. The young leaves possess fine pectoral properties, while the old ones are used for cleaning the teeth; the seeds of the fruit are medicinally considered anthelmintic, and a resin which flows from the stem or trunk of this tree, enjoys the reputation of being antisyphilitic.

Melons grow in almost every part of Tehuantepec, and usually possess, in a remarkable degree, saccharine properties seldom equalled in more temperate climates.

Sour Oranges, and those of the wood, or del monte, are abundant in every part, while the Chinese Orange attains its sugary mellowncss only in the table land districts surrounding San Miguel Chimalapa.

Mammee Apple, called by the natives Mamey Colorado, is a fruit growing on a shrub-like tree, which is rather parasitical, and yields a resinous juice: the flowers are numerous, axillary, or terminal, and in color they are either white,

pink, or red, depending on the variety. Great excellence is ascribed to this fruit in the tropical regions of America, being highly esteemed as a desert, and it is said to rival the Mangosteen, the most delicious of all fruits which inhabits the straits of Mallacca. This resembles a middle-sized orange, and is filled with a sweet and most delightful pulp.

Under the natural order of Soapworts, a kind of tree called technically Melicocca Bijuga, but by the natives of the Isthmus Mamoncillo, grows generally throughout the country. Its berries possess an agreeable subacid flavor; its leaves are alternate, compound, and often marked with dots, while the flowers are in recemes, small, white or pink.

Punica Granatum, under the order of Myrtaceæ, is a tree and also a shrub of the Isthmus, having red, white, and occasionally yellow flowers. It is celebrated in medicine, forming en[illegible] forests in Persia. A decoction of the bark of its roots is a powerful anthelmintic, and in its flowers one finds properties which are tonic and astringent; while the acid juice of its seeds is found useful in bilious fevers; the bark of its fruit is much used in chronic dysentery. The natives call this species Granado.

Wild tomatos grow in most parts, and are used for culinary purposes. In the enumeration of plants, trees, and shrubs abounding in various portions of Tehuantepec territory, which I have made, and am still to make, to a certain extent, my object is to present the capabilities of a country which it seems a sin against Providence to let molder in the waste of its natural grandeur. It is now like the Quaker spirit, it will remain inert till some great moment moves it to the center, and shakes from its fettered thought that darkness which bedims reason, and teaches man that he is a tool.

The fruit of the Papaya Carica is abundant. A great peculiarity observed in the juice of its unripe fruit is that it is

a most powerful and efficient vermifuge; and moreover that the tree has the singular property of rendering the toughest animal substances tender, by causing a separation of the muscular fibre; its very vapor, even, does this. Newly killed meat suspended among the leaves, and even old hogs and old poultry, when fed on the leaves and fruit, become tender in a few hours. This is the Papaw.

Under the order of Laurels I will not omit to mention several species of trees which are noted for the valuable properties embraced in their constitutional formation. That of Caryodaphne Densiflora is one whose bark is brownish, and tonic in its application as medicine, and contains a great quantity of bitter and somewhat balsamic matter, while the leaves are gratefully aromatic, and are used in an infusion, like tea, against spasms of the bowels, and convulsive affections of pregnant women.

Another, called Sassafras Officinale, of that order, has a great reputation as a powerful sudorific, and especially combined with Guaiacum and Sarsaparilla, in cutaneous affections, chronic rheumatism, and old syphalitic maladies. The dried leaves of that species contain so much mucilage that they are frequently used within the tropics, and in the southern portion of the United States, for thickening soup, like Hibiscus Esculentus. The bark of the roots is preferred to the other portions of the tree.

In the northern division of Tehuantepec there are two species of trees, under the order of Myrtles, and called Psydium Pyriferum and Pomiferum, the latter of which is much more acid than the other. The former bears a white fruit, while the other a red.

These fruits are commonly known as Guavas, and resemble, in a great measure, the pomegranate respecting their oval shaped form and astringent properties. The pulp is made into an agreeable jelly, which imparts a delicate

flavor. They are indigenous to the tropics of America, whence they have been carried to the eastern world. In an eminent degree they possess a cooling property, when eaten with cream and sugar, which seems to invigorate the system, especially during the summer season within the tropical sphere. A taste for those fruits is necessarily acquired. Most of the whole family of Myrtles inhabit portions of the Isthmus, and are natives of the tropics; though they will bear acclimation to more temperate regions. Guayaba constitutes the common name of this genus in the northern portion of the country.

A species of the above order, called Caryophyllus aromaticus, bears a fruit, whose properties are well known in commerce; though it is its dried flower-buds which constitute the cloves of the shops.

The Pimiento tree belonges to this family, under the name of Eugenia acris, whose unripe fruit abounds in essential oil, which is a powerful irritant, and is often used to allay toothache. The bruised berries are considered carminative, and as adapted to stimulate the stomach, and promote digestion.

A plant call Chato-bejuco abounds in the forests of the northern division of the Isthmus, and is botanically known as Cacoloba urifera under the order of Polygonaceae. It is remarkable for its succulent violet calyx in which its nuts are enveloped, and is on that account called the Sea-side Grape in the West Indies. It yields an extremely astringent extract; its wood dyes red, and its currant-like berries are acid, pleasant, and edible.

Palma christi, technically known as Ricinus communis is noted for its seeds yielding an oil, remarkably though mildly purgative, and flourishes mostly in the northern division.

The Mexican Copaiba grows in the southern division and is here known by the name of Copalche, and technically by

that of Hedwigia balsamifera. Its concrete juice is hard, shining, transparent, citron-colored, and inordous, and in appearance resembles amber; and it forms a beautilul transparent varnish mixed with linseed oil, when dissolved by a heat little less than to boil the oil. This is a valuable article in commerce.

Cathartocarpus fistula of the sub-order of Fabaceae, is a plant known in the central and southern divisions, and, to a great extent, resembles, in its fruit, the properties of the Cassia lanceolata, the Senna of commerce.

Styrax officinale, known by the name of Liquidamber, is a species of trees under the order of Storaxworts, which produces amber gum, in the form of small reddish globules. It is a fragrant, bitterish, and honey-like substance. In medicine it is used as an expectorant.

Abounding in different portions of the Isthmus, one beholds trees and plants whose properties produce a tannic-acid, well adapted to promote the tanning of leather; such as the Mangle blanco, Guayabo, and Bejuco amarillo. Here one is not to pause and resort to chemical affinities, in order to obtain colors to supply the wants of a barbarous, a civilized, or a refined people; for the forests abound in plants and trees to meet their wants; as Nature smiles when the learned step aside to find artificial combinations to supplant her order.

The Genipap, a fruit as large as an orange, of a whitish-green color, but containing a dark purple juice with an agreeable vinous taste, is borne by a tree called Genipa Armericana, which inhabits the northern and southern divisions of the Isthmus, yielding a beautiful black color. The Vanilla aromatica, yielding a brown color, grows in the central and northern divisions of the Isthmus. The wood of the Maclura tinctoria is the dye wood called Fustick; it contains morine, a peculiar coloring matter, and grows in

most parts of Tehauntepec: Its fruit is pleasant, and is used in this country for medicine, applied to the same purposes as the black mulberry in Europe. Most of the order of Cedrelads abound in portions of the Isthmus, and are rather common to the tropics of America. The wood of this order is fragrant and aromatic, yielding a green color; and many species of the order are used for medicine, possessing properties both febrifugal, astringent, and peculiar to those of the Peruvian bark.

Campeachy-wood known on the Isthmus as Campeche, flourishes in the northern and southern divisions, though more generally in the southern; its wood yields a black or purple color, and is an article worth commercial adventure.

Among the purgatives or emetics, Ipecacuanha of the order of Cinchonads, holds one of the first ranks for utility; inhabiting the Isthmus and generally, tropical America. It is the root of the Cehpäelis Ipecacuanha, a little, creeping-rooted, half-herbaceous plant, found in damp, shady forests. It is also sudorific and expectorant. Its powder acts upon the respiratory passages as an irritant, producing spasmodic asthma. In some cases the mere odor of the root seems sufficient to excite difficulty of breathing, with a feeling of suffocation.

Extending one's research through the forests of this prolific country, the different species of plants and trees of the order of Ivywarts, present their importance to the thoughtful and speculative. Ginseng falls under this order, and might be procured most abundantly not only here, but in most parts of tropical America. It has an agreeable bittersweet root, and is used sometimes as Liquorice. The Chinese are said to administer it in all diseases resulting from the weakness of the body. Many species of Leguminous plants flourish in portions of the Isthmus, and of this *order, the roots* of the Liquorice may be mentioned, which

contains an abundance of a sweet, mucilaginous juice, and is much esteemed as a pectoral.

In the order of Sapotads, several species of fruit are found highly distinguished in their native countries, especially on the Isthmus, as articles of desserts: Such as the Sappodilla plum, the Star apple, and the Marmalade.

Several of the species of Gingerwort may be observed in most parts of the Territory. They are nearly all tropical in their habits, and noted as objects of great beauty, either on account of the high development of the floral envelops, or because of the rich and glaring color of the bracts. However, they are chiefly valued for the sake of the aromatic stimulating properties of the root or rhizome; such as are found in Ginger, Galangale, and Zedoary; while many more species of this order are used in like-manner. The warm and pungent roots of the greater and less Galangale, are not only used by the Indian doctors in cases of dyspepsia, but are also considered useful in coughs, given in infusion.

A species of Curcuma of this order is supposed to furnish the astringent Mexican drug, called Cascara de Pingue, which abounds in tannin. Jicara grows in most parts of equatorial America. It falls within the order of Crescentiads, and is specifically known as Crescentia cujete, the Calabash tree, which bears a great gourd-like fruit, filled with a sub-acid pulp. This is eaten by the natives, and out of it the natives prepare poultices, and use its hard shell for holding fluids, in the room of bottles.

No good reason can be assigned why the Breadfruit-tree, botanically called Artocarpus, of the order of Artocarpads, would not flourish on the continent of America within the tropics, as well as on the islands scattered over the Pacific Ocean, possessing a similar climate. The edible quality of the bread-fruit seems to be owing to the presence of a large quantity of starch in its succulent head.

The Palo de Vaca, or Cow-tree, which I have mentioned in a letter descriptive of the fruits and productions, peculiar, in part, to tropical America, is a species of the Brosimum, of the order above. The milk which this tree yields has been analysed by various chemists, and is pronounced as rich and wholesome, and as good as that of the cow.

In the central division of the Isthmus, one observes a species of the order called Fabaceae, bearing the tamarind plum, which has a pod formed with a delicate, agreeable pulp, much less acid than that of the Tamarind. This species is known as Dialium Indicum. Copaifera officinalis is a species also of the order under review, and is found not only here, but in many of the equatorial parts of America, especially in the province of Antioquia of South America.

The balsam of Copaiva is a liquid resinous juice which flows from incisions made in the stem of this tree. The juice is transparent, of a whitish or pale-yellowish color, and possesses an agreeable smell, and a bitterish, pungent taste. It is of the consistency of oil, or a little thicker; and as a medicine, it is corroborating and detergent. Gum Dragon and Red Sandal-wood belong to Pterocarpus Draco and Santalinus; while Gum Lac belongs to Erythrina monosperma; and all of these are species of the order last mentioned. The first flourishes in all portions of the Isthmus, while the latter more in the central and southern divisions. The valuable properties belonging to each of these, are generally well known to the commercial world. Sangre-drago and Palo de rosa comprise the Dragon and Sandal species of trees, as existing on the Isthmus.

Several kinds of the family of Bignoniads are noticed growing, not only in Tehauntepec, but far south of the Equator; especially in Brazil, where they are felled for the sake of their timber; that called Ipe-tabacco furnishes

durable ship timber, and that called Ipeuna is considered one of the hardest species of wood known.

The order of Fabaceae still furnishes more species of great importance; and in this view, the gum Anime is procured from Hymenaea courbaril; and the Copal of Mexico is conceded to be the produce of a plant allied to this; while the kind called Aloexylum agallochum, produces one of the two sorts of Calambac, Eagle-wood, or Lign-aloes, a fragrant substance, which, it is stated, consists of a concretion of the oily particles into a resin in the center of the trunk. This is brought on by some disease, and the tree in time dies of it. This species of trees abounds on the Isthmus, and also in India. Of all perfumes, this resin is the most grateful to Oriental nations; it is a "stimulant, corroborant, cephalic, and cardiac." Its scent is used against vertigo and paralysis. In still continuing my survey of the natural productions of this bountiful and productive country, I am led to notice several species of Sebestens or Cordiaceae. They are peculiar to the tropics; the flesh of their fruit is succulent, mucilaginous, and emollient, as it is seen in the Cordia Myxa and Latifolia. The smell of their nuts when cut is heavy and disagreeable, while the taste of the kernels is like that of fresh filberts. These are the true Sebastens of the European Materia Medica. Cordia Myxa of this order is reckoned one of the best kinds for kindling fire by friction; and it is said to have furnished the wood from which the Egyptians constructed their mummy-cases.

This country is not destitute of its pineries; for various species of the order of Pinaceae (Conifers) exist in the high altitudes of the central division, and would soon be turned to account, when the plains of this fertile, yet distracted territory may be settled by those, whose purposes it shall be to use and distribute the bounties of nature.

Already in these letters I have alluded to the plant called

Vanilla aromatica; however I desire to mention this species of Orchids again, in order to have their properties more generally known.

Vanilla is one of the most delightful aromatics yet discovered. The substance called by this name in the shops is the dried fruit of the Vanilla planifolia, and other species; these contain a great deal of essential oil, and of benzoic acid, and they are used as a stomachic; while some of them are considered to contain anthelmintic and diuretic properties.

Several species of the order of Oliveworts have been noticed in this territory. The expressed juice from the kind termed Olea europaea is called Olive oil, the medicinal properties of which are demulcent, emollient and laxative. It enters extensively into the preparation of plasters, liniments, cerates, ointments, and enemas. As an external application, accompanied by long continued friction of the skin, it has been found beneficial in preventing the contagious influence of the plague. The bark is bitter and astringent, and has had a great reputation as a substitute for Cinchona. It also yields a gum-like substance, once in repute as a vulnerary. Its wood is extremely durable and close-grained.

Several species of Cedrelads flourish in the northern and sonthern divisions; the wood of this order is generally fragrant and aromatic. The bark of the Cedrela is fragrant and resinous; while that of Cedrela Toona and Swietenia Mahagoni is highly medicinal, and is accounted febrifugal; the former is a powerful astringent; and though not bitter it is a tolerably good substitute for the Peruvian bark in the cure of remitting and intermitting fevers. Satin-wood is the produce of the kind termed Chloroxylon Swietenia, which is one of the plants that yield the wood oil of India. Mahogany is the timber of Swietenia Mahagoni, which is

so valuable for various purposes, a description of which I have already given.

In this review I must not omit to mention a few species of the order of Spurgeworts, as abounding in this prolific land. The Crotonic species are considered important for medicinal purposes; as Crotons perdicipes, campestris, balsamifer, thurifer, adipatus, humilis, origanifolius, and niveus. Frankincense is extracted from Crotons thurifer and adipatus. However, the most important among the aromatic Spurgeworts are the species which yield Cascarilla, a valuable bitter, tonic, aromatic, and stimulent bark, and which also inhabit the West Indies. It is certain that the Croton pseudo-China furnishes Cascarilla in the low tropical portions of Mexico, where it is called Quina blanca, and Capalche bark.

In observing more particularly the natural productions of this favored land, several species of Mastworts present themselves for important commercial consideration; the more especially the kind called Quercus Suber.

The white and live Oaks also abound, as well as a few others adapted to dying. The fixed acids, called Quercitannic and Gallic, which have the power of guarding the animal and vegetable fibre from decay, are abundant in many of the Oaks inhabiting this country, whose bark is therefore, invaluable for tanning.

The yellow dyeing bark, called Quercitron, belongs to Quercus tinctoria. Within the tropics this order of trees abounds in the high lands, and is unknown in the low altitudes. Quercus Suber produces the cork so well known, and so much used in the daily concernments of life. It is the external bark of this species, which is distinguished by the fungous texture of its bark, and the leaves are evergreen, oblong, somewhat oval, downy underneath, and waved. In the collecting of cork, it is customary to slit it

with a knife, at certain distances, in a perpendicular direction from the top of the tree to the bottom; and to make two incisions across, one near the top, and the other near the bottom of the trunk. For the purpose of stripping the bark, a curved knife with a handle at each end, is used. Sometimes it is stripped in pieces the whole length, and sometimes in shorter pieces,—cross cuts being made at certain intervals. After the pieces are detached, they are soaked in water, and when nearly dry, are placed over a fire of coals, which blackens their external surface.

By the latter operation they are rendered smooth, and all the small blemishes are thereby concealed; the larger holes and cracks are filled up by the introduction of soot and dirt. They are next loaded with weights to make them even, and are subsequently dried and packed in bales for exportation. When burnt, cork constitutes that light black substance known by the name of Spanish black. The corks for bottles are cut lengthwise of the bark, and consequently the pores lie across. After the outer bark is taken off of the tree, a new epidermis is formed, which, in six or seven years, becomes fit for use, and thus the world is furnished with *cork*.

In looking over the order of nature within the tropics, especially equatorial America, one's admiration is agreeably heightened when he beholds and studies the peculiarities of Mangroves. The bark of this order is usually astringent, while the fruit of the kind called Rhizophora Mangle is reputed to be sweet and edible; and the juice, when fermented, forms a light wine. To impart the peculiarities of the Mangrove tribe, I cannot but fall in rapture with the graphic description given by Dr. Wm. Hamilton, which is as follows:

"In the economy of nature the Mangrove performs a most important part, wresting annually fresh portions of the

land from the dominion of the ocean, and adding them to the dominion of man. This is effected in a twofold manner, by the progressive advance of the roots, and by the aërial germination of the seeds, which do not quit their lofty cradle till they have assumed the form of actual trees, and drop into the water with their roots ready prepared to take possession of the mud in advance of their parent stems. The progression by the means of the roots is effected by fresh roots which issue from the trunk at some distance above the surface of the water, and arching downwards, penetrate the mud, establishing themselves as the pioneers of fresh invasions of the retiring element. In this manner the plants, soon after this descent from their parent trees, continue, during their early years, to advance steadily forward till they have obtained a height of about fifteen feet, and gained a position considerably in advance of their parent trunks. After this fewer additions are made to the roots, but the head begins to expand in every direction, spreading its branches on all sides. These branches in their turn send down long slender roots, like those of the Banyan tree, which, rapidly elongating, descend from all varieties of height, and reaching the water penetrate the mud, becoming in turn independent trees; thus a complicated labyrinth is at length formed. Almost every part of the Mangrove, the bark, roots, and the fruit more particularly, abounds in an astringent principle, which is successfully applied to the purposes of tanning. For external application, in arresting hemorrhage and disposing malignant ulcers, to assume a healthy action, a decoction of the bark has been found most effectual by Dr. Barham, who informs us, in his work, that he had a son 'that was extraordinarily full of the confluent small pox, the soles of whose feet separated and came off like the sole of a shoe, and left his feet w, and so tender that he could not set them upon the

ground; therefore he sent for some of the tan fat, or liquor of this bark, such as the natives tan their leather with, and adding a little alum, boiled it down very strong, with which he bathed his feet every day, and in about a week's time his feet were as hard and as firm as ever, and he was able to walk about with shoes on.' For tanning, the Mangrove is said to be infinitely superior to oak bark, completing in six weeks an operation which, with the latter, occupies at least six months; and the sole leather so tanned is considered to be far more lasting than any other.

More than I should have done, I have described the geographical and topographical positions of the territory of Tehuantepec, and its productions, both those which have been introduced, and those indigenous to the soil, but for the deep interest and importance which this portion of the Mexican Republic is fast assuming with reference to the traveling community, and the commercial affairs existing between the two oceans.

No country is more kindly smiled on by the fecundity of nature, exciting man to works and deeds of greatness, still there is none which feels more the sting of indolence and utter inactivity. It is sleeping the sleep of death! To a consideable extent I have indulged myself in describing the indigenous products; but it has been with a view to throw light upon all objects which have excited my attention respecting this favored land. The productions of the States of Oajaca, Chiapa, Tobasco, and Vera Cruz, as well as Central America, and a large portion of South America, assimilate themselves to those under review in the territory of Tehuantepec, and would, to an industrious people, present a field as truly romantic as grand, profitable as extensive, overshadowing the world besides. Americans of late have by a foreign people, (not only foreign by their very natures, but by *will*,) been termed a nation of filibusters! And why?

because of a few restless spirits in our midst, who, perhaps, even at home, would rather steal than work. But the spirit of this unlawful aggrandizement is not confined to a few restless Americans; for it is widely spread among a class of foreigners who have immigrated to our shores, and who, finding a subsistence difficult without labor, have associated together, with a few unprincipled Americans, and under the pretence of settlement in a foreign land, have assumed the rights which the compact of nations, nor the order of nature, can justify; and fleeing from the United States in this condition, and with this spirit, the American people in foreign lands are consequently branded and stigmatized as a nation of filibusters!

The compact of nations nor the law of nature forbids the immersion of one sovereignty into that of another, because each is free to act in the same light as individuals composing that sovereignty; therefore, if the United States government desires more territory, what natural right springs up to prevent it from such purchase, any more than would if an individual wanted another farm? It is the fact of the disposition of the United States to purchase territory that has characterized them as a band of filibusters abroad. That nations, in the character of filibusters, have ever existed since the inception of human society, it needs but to turn over the astute pages of history to demonstrate.

As I have already remarked, Americans desiring to travel or settle in Mexico should come here guarded by letters of introduction, which would pass them into the civil bands of Mexican society; and then conducting themselves with as much propriety and respect as they would claim at home from foreigners, they would not be disposed to complain of having come to so fair a land.

More guarded than ever should the government of the United States be with respect to admitting claims on the

part of Americans against the Mexican government, for my own experience and observation have taught me that too many of them are gross exactions, originating from difficulties which they have incurred from their own willful malignity of character.

Near the large cities, and even towns and villages which I have visited in Western Mexico, my admiration was frequently excited to behold, not distant from their borders, high walls erected, embracing an area proportionate to the population, where lay the tombs of past ages! As among other civilized nations, here I beheld the hand of art tracing the deeds of those who had acquired for themselves distinguished merit. These lines were written by the sculptor's pen.

By the custom of the country, as well as by its religion, the property or the relations of the one who is about to be entombed, are forced to pay such an entrance fee as Pluto demanded of those who were to be ferried over the river Styx. In performing the last offices to the one departed, the ceremony and procession are in proportion to the amount paid; and this would seem to warrant a person in the belief that mourners might be hired to perform their part of sadness and weeping. Many of the Mexican cemeteries are beautifully ornamented with tropical shade and fruit trees, as well as by rose bushes and silver fountains.

The comparative security which a man enjoys in the Republic of Mexico and that of the United States of America, with respect to personal rights, impresses one with wonder and astonishment. In the one, settlements are confined to cities, towns, villages, haciendas or ranchos, though mostly to the three former; and beyond them, the sight is seldom treated with smiling habitations and the promise of a future abundance; for marauding ladrones are ever on the alert to plunder the pastures and granaries of

their abundance; while in the other, away from cities, towns, and villages, the watchman sleeps, and the keys of security rust for want of more use.

In closing this letter, while contemplating the nearer relations the two Republics of North America are now, by treaty, and commercial stipulations, making towards approaching a unity of interest, and drawing closer those bands around scattered fragments of nations that Nature had designed, from the peculiar and unseverable sphere they occupy to represent but one Great People, I have felt, under the volition of my pen, the onward march of destiny marked out to the sovereign States, and constitutional compact of the North. Theirs it is to navigate the unsounded rivers, and set the huge leviathans snorting up the mountain streams, and wafting to the ocean and to every flag, the products of their newly acquired and first upturned soil; as it is theirs to build the happy mart, and shoot the shuttled looms from growths of their busy and adapted earth; as it is theirs to build the scholar's home, and spread the useful lore; as it is theirs to level the towering mountains, and lay the iron bands; also, as it is theirs to connect the most foreign parts by electric wings, and thunder their lightning news!

Therefore, in pursuance of the considerations here *raised* to view, friendship, mutual concession, and a desire to promote reciprocal interests, should, in order to effect great and noble ends in the present relationship in which the citizens of the two Republics stand to each other, be written upon the brow, and be the Pillar of Light, which marks the path to mutual munificence and greatness.

In looking over the past history of Anahuac, of New Spain, and lastly, the Republic of Mexico, the pen may certainly conclude it a country of strange *adventurers;* first, perhaps from towards the Arctic circle, hoping for a

warmer sun and a more congenial sky; secondly, from sunny Spain, the basis of hope was gold—the glittering metal; and thirdly, the territory itself, the apparent object being political liberty, though, under the cover of ecclesiastical despotism. In the prosperous rule of the Toltecs, the Government of Anahuac seemed, from the scattered pages of history I have been able to peruse as to them, to partake of more liberal and enlightened views and principles, with reference to the regulations of its political peace and prosperity, than under the arbitrary despotism of Montezuma, one of the most successful, yet the most avaricious of the past Indian chieftains.

The settlement of Anahuac, under the auspices of the Spanish Government, had but one absorbing motive in the fore-ground, which was to demand gold, and return with cargoes of the precious metal to the mother-country, without advancing the steadfast prosperity of the newly acquired El Dorado of the West; and in this view, it was only the force of *circumstances*, that caused the Spanish adventurers to depart, in the least, from a system, which, if pursued generally, would produce the most disastrous consequences to the prosperity of a State, or its *dependency*.

In the formation of this new Government, a moral code was not sufficient; but that of past despotism and anarchy was the nucleus, as also the basis of thought, of action, and of politics, becoming thereby Church and State, bound like the culprit by a merciless few, which, to the consternation of the nineteenth century, appalling as it may have been in all its forms, during the past centuries of its sway, has been perpetrated with as much tenacity and fixity of purpose, as that religious fanaticism, which ever seized the ancients; moreover, especially, their rulers, in every age of their municipal being, and which has ever desolated the happy hearth-stones of the moderns up to the present

period of time, through the means and subserving the purposes of ecclesiastical and political aspirants, desiring to be promoted to the first offices of the State.

The pages of history abound with sanguine monuments erected to the fate of past nations, who were ruled by political religion alone, making no difference what that religion may have been, when it has had exclusive control of States! The Chinese, the Tyrian, the Babylonian, the Egyptian, the Assyrian, the Grecian, the Jewish, and the Roman, Governments of antiquity, as well as all modern nations having their politics founded *upon* this basis, had fallen, have fallen, and are falling, mouldered, and mouldering, in the design of their splendor, which the magnificence of their expectancies was, and may be, intended to eclipse.

The historic records gathered to delineate the prominent events of the Spanish Republics on the Continent of America, since the formation of their Constitutions, should instigate and awaken in the patriots of other nations, an enquiry into the cause of their anarchy, their want of peace, and their almost total overthrow and annihilation of personal security and liberty, of rising prosperity and happiness, with *one* or *two radiating instances* of *exception.* The mind of man, with such dark pictures presented to its conception, reason and judgment, should feel pained to read the accursed demonstrations of petty tyranny under the sanctity of the Gown, the garb of religion.

The Catholic religion has not been alone in the endeavor to enslave mind and make it bow to a godly *few*, teaching it that holiness and righteousness should emanate only from the ostentatious parade of pulpit sounds, sumptuous tapestry, gewgaw pictures, and the tinkling of bells; for, where is there a creed or a system of religion which now appeals to my pen to be noted in this letter for its purity, and which

has never been used for sinister ends, or for corrupting influences upon the body politic, among its petty chieftains? And history has stamped that fact too deeply in the minds of the *veteran Republicans* of the United States, to be effaced for ages to come; and that too, when persecution was the order of Europe, and the heritage of America! No man can doubt the propriety of religion, and that every prosperous people should possess the true principles of it; but then, it should be pure and unselfish; it should not form the basis nor motive power to wield the State, letting that province exclusively alone to politics, with reference to which, there will ever be two parties in a State, divided in their notions, their reasons, and their judgments, as to such measures as will conduce to the greatest national good, without the coalition of religion.

Longer than I should have done, I have required your attention, have been a pensioner at your will, and taxed your patience; and the only reward I may hope you to have received, is the pleasure of having perused these letters; and that too, with a tolerant spirit of forbearance, as I have made no effort to marshal elocution, in order to attract or please, but have been content to write as appearances, circumstances, conjunctures, and evidences, have forcibly struck my mind, while making observations.

In these many letters, it has been solely the endeavor of the author to unfold truth, letting it touch whomsoever it might, and as it has appeared to him; regardless of politics, parties, religion, or the censure which he may incur, from a frank expression in disfavor of Church and State. He is aware of the unkind feelings which this may engender, in the minds of many persons of contracted notions; however, conviction would be brought home to such, should they visit this Republic, the theatre of political and religious factions and revolutions!

More than three hundred years have elapsed since the Conquest of Anahuac; and since that period, what has been its progress, and how much happier and better conditioned are the Indian bands, who now merely exist as serfs or apparent slaves, paying a pittance in order to live a pious and holy life, than their Forefathers were? though cruel and wicked as they may have been, in offering human sacrifices; for in their wake and succession, human sacrifices have constantly been offered up, to appease Mars, the ancient God of war, even to the present time! and who, and what have been the Actors and the consequences? Who brought light and intelligence to this *foreign land*? and how have they been disseminated among the Wild Men of the Forest, and impressed upon their reasons? In this view, what are the consequences emanating from such light and intelligence, in the form of internal peace and personal security, of inland development and improvements, except those which pertain to a few personages? who have been promoted *thus* at the sacrifice of the mass of the community!

Adios,

Señor,

AGRICOLA,

CINCINNATUS.

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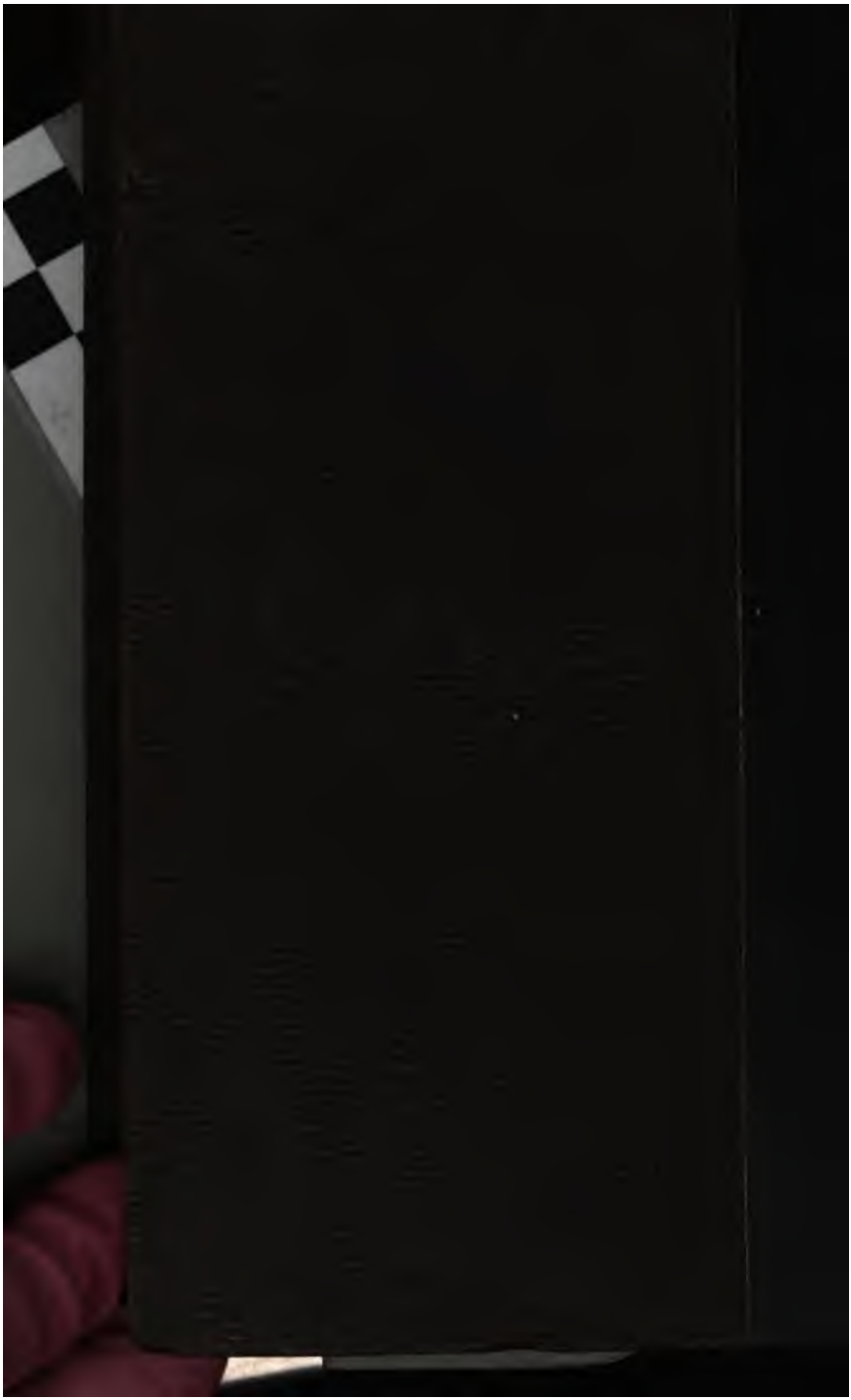
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